

Agenda item 12

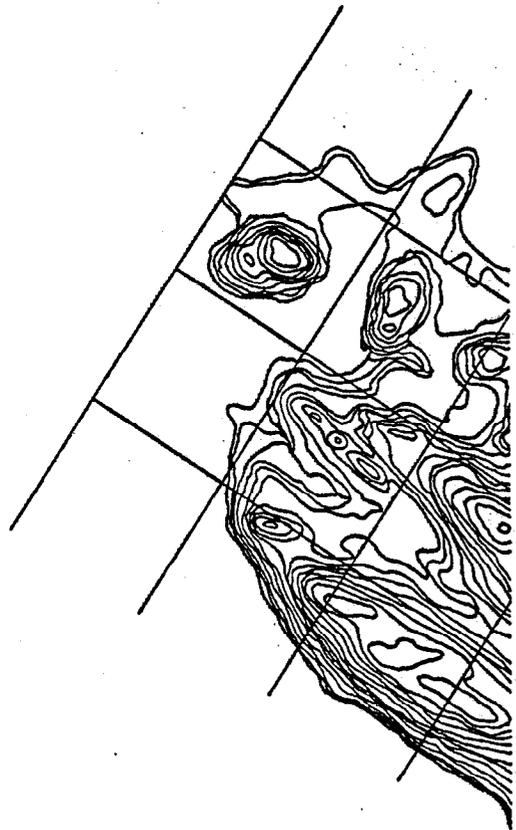
GUIDE TO THE FIELD COLLECTION OF
NATIVE GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

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GUIDE TO the field collection of native geographical names

Canadian Permanent Committee on
Geographical Names



Provisional Edition

GUIDE TO THE FIELD COLLECTION OF NATIVE GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

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Attached is the table of contents of a manual being prepared by the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for the field collection of native toponyms. We anticipate that the manual, in a provisional edition, will be available in English early in 1992. A French-language version will follow, and a decision will then be made about translation into various native languages of Canada.

It is hoped that the process presented here may provide a useful tool in the recognition of native cultures and provide a stepping stone to the formal recognition of native toponyms by the CPCGN, through the jurisdictions of its members. At the same time, we hope that this contribution to toponymic methodology may prove useful at an international level, and will be a valuable addition to United Nations programmes that promote standardization of geographical names around the world.

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To facilitate the work of the CPCGN in gathering and processing names of native origin, the CPCGN Secretariat coordinated a symposium in Ottawa in May 1986. As a result, over twenty resolutions were put forward, and subsequently endorsed by the CPCGN in October 1987. In following up the first three resolutions, the CPCGN contracted Professor Ludger Müller-Wille to produce a manual on the field collection, recording and office treatment of native geographical names.

Professor Müller-Wille (Department of Geography, McGill University) has since 1973 acquired experience in the design and conduct of systematic toponymic surveys with the Inuit of the central and eastern Canadian Arctic. In January 1984, he produced his first basic manual to train and guide Inuit researchers and informants working on surveys for the Nuna-Top project (1984-87) in Nunavik, Quebec. This basic field manual has been revised several times and served, along with other publications on field survey methodology, as the point of departure for Professor Müller-Wille's comprehensive manual *The Nuna-Top method: methodology for systematic field surveys of indigenous geographical names in Canada* (in preparation).

After discussion, the CPCGN members decided to modify this original text to produce a practical "guide", which would address the technical, rather than the academic, user. The guide, although developed from a methodology proven by and with the Inuit, is designed for more general use - with other native peoples in Canada, and hopefully also with a broad range of cultural, socio-economic and linguistic groups of non-native peoples. This new guide documents the protocol in approaching native groups and their informants, notes the knowledge and experience required by field investigators, suggests the equipment and supplies needed, draws attention to the kinds of information to be collected, recommends how to select informants, and goes through the necessary steps to undertake the questioning and the recording of the collected information.

The guide is designed to provide a practical and manageable framework for the conduct of systematic toponymic surveys to record names from oral tradition. At its 1991 annual meeting, the CPCGN recommended that a provisional edition be used and field tested during the next two years. Improvements and textual changes are welcomed, and will be used to enhance the usefulness of future editions of the manual.

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