

# NEW ZEALAND GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES STANDARDISATION

Consistent use of geographic names is an essential part of effective communication and supports socio-economic development, conservation and infrastructure

Geographic names identify the landscape and reflect culture & heritage

Correct use of accurate geographic names provides benefits to local, national and international communities

## New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa (NZGB) - 'The memorial markers of the landscape'

- The NZGB is New Zealand's national place naming authority responsible for official geographic names
- The NZGB has a responsibility to safeguard the geographic naming traditions, culture and heritage brought to New Zealand by its various communities
- The geographic naming work of the NZGB contributes to a geographic information system that provides for economic, cultural, and social value to all New Zealanders
- The NZGB is steward (kaitiaki) and custodian of New Zealand's official geographic names
- The NZGB is principal adviser to the New Zealand government on geographic names (official and unofficial) - especially to Land Information New Zealand and the Office of Treaty Settlements
- The NZGB consults with New Zealanders to take account of their views in its decision making
- The NZGB's decision making and advisory capabilities are deployed where they can most benefit the longer term interests of New Zealand
- The NZGB's decision making is independent and based on robust processes

## Process for making geographic name proposal:

1. PROPOSAL RECEIVED

2. RESEARCH & REPORT BY SECRETARIAT

3. BOARD CONSIDERS PROPOSAL

4. PROPOSAL PUBLICLY NOTIFIED SEEKING SUBMISSIONS

5. BOARD CONSIDERS SUBMISSIONS

6. BOARD OR MINISTER MAKE FINAL DECISION

7. OFFICIAL PLACE NAME GAZETTED

8. GAZETTEER UPDATED



**Why have official geographic names?**

- To provide practical, unambiguous, fundamental and unique location identification and navigation for the physical landscape we live in
- To recognise heritage and culture - to give a sense of place
- To provide a reliable and authoritative source for standardised, consistent and accurate names
- To demonstrate New Zealand's jurisdictional interests
- To provide a fundamental data theme for geospatial data layers
- To resolve problems of consistency in the authorization and use of geographical names
- To identify where we are as we go about our everyday business - they are a component of our infrastructure, and most importantly they matter in emergency responses
- To ensure that important names are preserved and restored

**Why are geographic names important to New Zealanders?**

- There are long term benefits to the nation - practical, administrative, social, cultural, historical - including national or cultural identity
- A geographic name is a fundamental part of an address along with the road name and property number. Unique and usable geographic names are a key way to locate people and property, contributing to efficient government administration and linking data for a wide range of public and private purposes

**Why consult?**

- The NZGB wants to understand the views of New Zealand communities so its can make informed, robust and enduring decisions on geographic name proposals

**Why are Māori geographic names so important?**

- New Zealand geographic names indicate the cultural diversity of people past and present. They reflect New Zealand's history and the different people who have lived here. Of these people, Māori have lived here for many centuries as the indigenous people and are responsible for many of the geographic names in New Zealand
- Māori is an official New Zealand language
- The importance of recording of Māori geographic names has been recognised in legislation and in the NZGB's strategic goals and policies
- Since the 1970s there has been a steady move towards greater recognition of the significance of Māori geographic names as part of New Zealand's history and culture. Milestones include the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 and the Māori Language Act 1987 (updated in 2016)
- The increasing recognition of Māori geographic names acknowledges the importance of matauranga (knowledge) and kōrero (speaking). These stories and history preserve and celebrate the identity and mana (status) of Māori communities

**What about Treaty of Waitangi names?**

- To give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi), the NZGB is required to collect and encourage the use of original Māori geographic names where they exist. It is also good practice to record the history of a place or feature, and naming it is a key way of doing that
- Knowing the stories behind geographic names adds to our sense of identity and belonging - helping us to better connect with who we are, where we're from, and the importance of those who came before us
- This includes the on-going commitment to post settlement relationships with Māori including restoration of mana (status) and identity which are intrinsically linked to the geography of the land and the story of place
- The NZGB's contribution to geographic names in the cultural redress part of Treaty of Waitangi settlements continues to be an important priority

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Admiralty BA 1212 (1866) Chart: John Lort Stokes

Treaty of Waitangi: The agreement signed by representatives of the Queen of England and leaders of most Māori tribes when Great Britain first claimed New Zealand as a colony in 1840