MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TRAINING DATA FILES GAZETTEERS

Recent developments concerning the content of the Canadian geographical names data base

Submitted by Kathleen O'Brien, Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names Secretariat, Canada

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING THE CONTENT OF THE CANADIAN GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES DATA BASE

During 1998 - 1999, the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base (CGNDB) was re-engineered. The work performed for the re-engineering project included a complete redevelopment of the user interface; a substantive revision of both the system data model and the physical database design; an upgrade of the version of Oracle Server from 7.1.4 to Oracle 8.0.4; and a conversion of data from the existing system into the new system.

The CGNDB is still using the ISO 8859-1 standard. *Amendment 11* to the ISO/IEC standard 10646-1 is called *Unified Canadian Aboriginal Syllabics*. This standard with this Amendment will be useful in future for inputting Inuktitut geographical names in their Syllabic versions.

(1) Nunavut changes

When the new territory of Nunavut was created on 1 April 1999, many changes took place. Not least among them was identifying records that had been part of the Northwest Territories and coding them so that they could be identified as Nunavut records. Records for features that cross the Northwest Territories - Nunavut boundary had to be duplicated so that each jurisdiction had its own record. These records also had to be flagged to indicate that the features cross the territorial boundary. The Related Maps fields [1] and Latitude and Longitude coordinates fields in these records had to be updated so that they reflect the correct position of the features within Nunavut and Northwest Territories. Fourteen records for features that cross the Nunavut - Manitoba boundary had to be updated as well.

(2) New Indian Reserves

With land claims agreements being signed and completed, there are many new Indian Reserves being created in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia. Information on the establishment dates and locations has been requested from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development so that the CGNDB may be updated.

(3) Names decisions

Currently Manitoba and British Columbia are the most active in approving new names or changing existing names. Most provinces and territories make new decisions on an individual, case-by-case basis rather than making many decisions at one time. These decisions are received either in hard copy format or in digital format from the jurisdictions involved. The names are entered into the CGNDB and the features are recorded on topographical maps for reference purposes.

(4) Municipal changes

Across Canada, several jurisdictions are going through municipal restructuring. This can range from a simple name change to the amalgamation of several municipalities resulting in fewer municipalities. In Ontario and Quebec, municipal changes are still ongoing. Other provinces also have municipal changes but much fewer in comparison. The following table gives a breakdown of changes, either already done or proposed, for the five-year period beginning in 1997.

---

[1] Related Maps fields contain are all Canadian maps or charts on which a feature name appears. The first map listed is always the one where the coordinates are found.

Single digits indicate a change of name only. The subtraction formulae indicate the number of original municipalities and what is now left after municipal restructuring.

Municipal changes					
Province	1997	1998	1999	2000 (proposed)	2001 (proposed)
Alberta	1	12 - 2 = 10	9	---	---
Manitoba	---	---	---	---	---
New Brunswick	---	12 - 8 = 4	---	---	---
Newfoundland	1	1	?	---	---
Ontario	18 - 10 = 8	244 - 159 = 85	88 - 59 = 29	20 - 12 = 8	32 - 23 = 9
Quebec	45 - 23 = 22	36 - 20 = 16	---	---	---
Saskatchewan	---	---	3 - 1 = 2	---	---

Another form of municipal change is the change of entity, e.g., form Village to Town or from Town to City. The municipalities do not change their name in this process. The table below gives an indication of such changes for the five-year period beginning in 1997.

Municipal changes of entity					
Province	1997	1998	1999	2000 (proposed)	2001 (proposed)
Alberta	1	1	1	---	1
Manitoba	---	5	---	---	---
Newfoundland	131	---	---	---	---
Ontario	---	11	3	---	---
Quebec	23	12	---	---	---
Saskatchewan	3	3	---	---	---

(5) Other content changes
Major tasks for work on the CGNDB include: populating the Administrative Location fields[2] for all jurisdictions; upgrading coordinates to seconds; and eliminating dual records for Indian Reserves in favour of single records with double generics.

The Administrative Location fields are in the process of being populated. Some are being populated when records are upgraded because of municipal changes. Others are being upgraded on a case-by-case basis.

---

[2] The Administrative Location (Admin Loc 1 and Admin Loc 2) fields are fields that contain first and second level administrative location information for a record. Admin Loc 1 for all provinces and territories except Quebec contains the highest level of administrative entity, such as a County or Regional Municipality. Quebec records have the second level of administrative entity in this field. Admin Loc 2 contains the second level of administrative entity, such as City, Town, or Village. Quebec records in this field indicate the Municipalité régionale de comté, a higher administrative level that a municipality

Throughout the country, coordinates are being upgraded to seconds in an ongoing process. Some are being done through municipal changes, others are being done on a case-by-case basis. The exception is features such as mountain ranges and large water features. In such cases, it is not necessary to have such precise coordinates.

Nova Scotia is expected to send an upload of coordinates calculated to the second for all populated places and with NAD83 datum. About 2,300 records are involved. All feature records will be upgraded similarly and sent for uploading into the CGNDB. Previously, Manitoba had upgraded coordinates for its records to the second during production of the *Gazetteer of Canada: Manitoba* in 1994. This information was sent digitally and uploaded into the CGNDB.

Most Indian Reserve records are in the following dual format:

Berens River Indian Reserve 13   Berens River 13, Réserve indienne
(Indian Reserve)   (Réserve indienne).

They are in the process of being converted to the following format:
Berens River 13 (Indian Reserve - Réserve indienne).

Manitoba's Indian Reserve records are now in the new format. Records for the other jurisdictions will be changed gradually.

(6) Dissemination of information from the CGNDB
The Location-Narrative field[3] has been removed as one of the core (i.e., mandatory) fields that is distributed from the CGNDB. This field has not been maintained in a bilingual format and was removed for that reason. The information is still regarded as highly desirable information to have and will continue to be collected. It is stored on a different screen in the newly re-engineered data base.

(7) Databases in Canada
A paper on the CGNDB, presented at the 7th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names as E/CONF.91/L.33, was published in the July 1998 issue of *Canoma*. Several other articles on provincial databases across the country appeared in the same issue. All of these articles were then put together in *Toponymic Databases of Canada 1998*. This publication also includes addresses for web sites that have general geographical names information or have searchable databases.

(8) CGNDB Records Manual
As a result of the re-engineering of the CGNDB, the *CGNDB Records Manual* which tells staff what needs to be entered in each of the data base fields is in the process of being rewritten. The format will follow the fields on each of the new data base screens. Examples and explanations will be provided for clarification.

\

---

[3] The Location-Narrative (Loc-Narr) field contains information about a feature's position relative to other features or places. For Quebec records, this field could possibly be considered a third Administrative Location field.