

**Ninth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names**

New York, 21 - 30 August 2007

Item 6 (c) of the provisional agenda*

Meetings and conferences:

National names meetings, conferences and symposiums

Council of Geographic Names Authorities

Submitted by the United States of America**

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Council of Geographic Names Authorities

Since 1977 there has been a tradition of holding an annual meeting between the members of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (US-BGN) and its affiliates at the State level. The tradition started with the States in proximity to the Rocky Mountains, then expanded to include all States in the western United States (U.S.), and finally in 1998 it evolved into the present day Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA), an organization representing all State Geographic Names Authorities in the U.S.

The annual COGNA conference is open to anyone with an interest in toponymy. In attendance are representatives of the State Names Authorities; the US-BGN; other State and Federal agencies; advisory groups; academia; and representatives from Federal or State/provincial agencies of other countries.

COGNA is dedicated to bringing together decision makers from Federal and State agencies, academia, and the public together to deliberate place naming principles, policies, procedures, and issues. The annual conference serves as the primary forum for the exchange of common-interest information with respect to the official designation of names for geographic features and cultural entities within geographical areas over which the US-BGN and State authorities have responsibility. The Domestic Names Committee (DNC) of the US-BGN is invited to hold its monthly meeting during the conference, and participates in an informal forum referred to as the State/Federal Roundtable to exchange information with the State authorities. State authorities also use the conference forum to seek information and/or advice from the US-BGN and associated Federal agencies. The forum provides the opportunity for COGNA to make recommendations to the US-BGN and/or associated Federal and State agencies. Academia and interested citizens are invited to present research papers and conduct workshops to use geographic names knowledge.

The following items are included in each COGNA.

1. A meeting of the DNC, US-BGN
2. The State/Federal Roundtable Discussion
3. A meeting of the host State's geographic names authority
4. The annual business meeting of the COGNA
5. Toponymic workshops
6. Academic papers
7. Meeting of the Toponymic Interest Group of the American Name Society
7. Toponymic Tour

From 2002 to 2006 the conferences have been held respectively in Baltimore, Maryland; Pacific Grove, California; Jacksonville, Florida; Portland, Oregon; and Boulder, Colorado.

The 2007 conference is scheduled to be held in Lexington, Kentucky on October 2-6, 2007, with the 2008 conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and in 2009 in Charleston, South Carolina. Delegates are invited to attend and can learn about registration at <http://cogna50usa.org/>