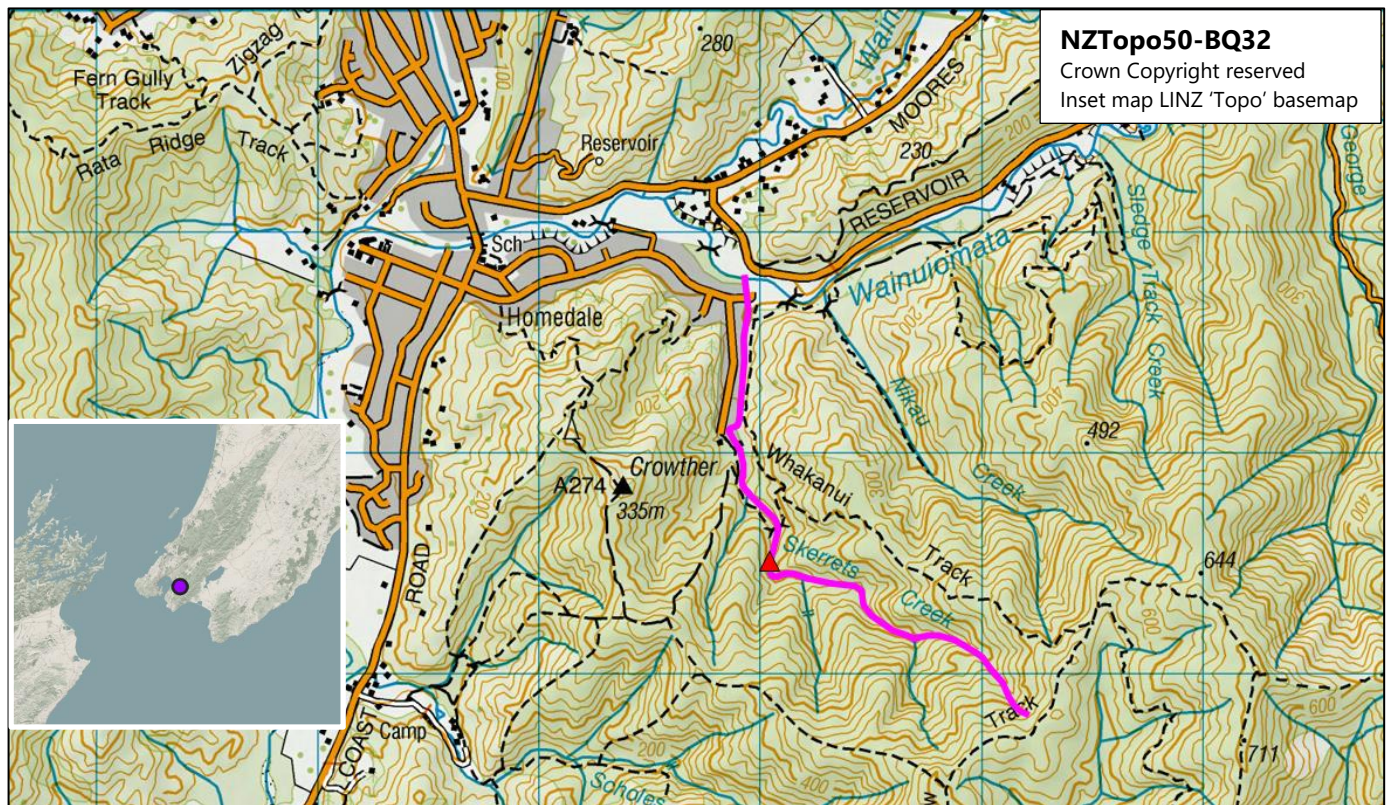


Proposal considered by the Board on 8 April 2022 for Skerretts Creek

[alteration from the official name Skerrets Creek]



Summary

The proposal is to alter the official place name Skerrets Creek to Skerretts Creek, for a small stream that flows northwesterly from McKerrow Track into Wainuiomata River, Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt.

The proposer advises that the feature is named for Sir Charles Perrin Skerrett (1863–1929), based on his association with the immediate area. Therefore, a second [t] is required to correct the spelling.

Because Skerrett was a relatively high profile lawyer many published documents confirm the spelling, and his probate also includes his signature.

Taranaki Whānui advise it has nothing to add to the proposal, and to date no response was received from Ngāti Toa Rangatira or Waiwhetū Marae.

Secretariat recommendation

At its 8 April 2022 hui the Board resolved this recommendation.

Accept the proposal to **alter** Skerrets Creek to **Skerretts Creek**, based on:

- a principal function of the Board being to correct the spelling of geographic names,
- evidence that the feature is named for Charles Perrin Skerrett, noting his association with the area,
- retaining the possessive form due to long term use and low public value,
- retaining the generic term 'Creek' due to long term use, and
- the proposed alteration not impacting emergency services.

and

Notify as a proposal to alter for one month.

Secretariat assessment and advice

The proposal

The proposal is to alter the spelling of an official name Skerrets Creek to Skerretts Creek. The proposer is local and has compiled the origins of Wainuiomata place names for Tararua Tramping Club.¹

The proposer advises that the feature is named for Sir Charles Perrin Skerrett (1863–1929). Skerrett was a high profile lawyer, who in later life served as King's Counsel and briefly Chief Justice of New Zealand (1927-1929).

In the 1880s-1890s Skerrett regularly fished for trout from a hut near the creek's confluence with Wainuiomata River.

To confirm Skerrett's association with the feature the proposer has provided:

- an excerpt from *Richard Seddon: Kings of Gods Own*² (2014) which relates Skerrett's regular excursions in Wainuiomata,
- an article from the *New Zealand Graphic*³ (1891) on Wainuiomata trout fishing, including a cartoon of Skerrett and a sketch of 'Mess Smith Dyer Skerret's Fishing Whare'. Spelling in the article varies with one or two [t]'s.
- a photo of 'Smith's Whare'⁴ (1888; Skerrett is not pictured),
- an obituary for Skerrett's friend Frank Dyer recounting the fishing trips (1938), and
- a link to Skerrett's biography on Te Ara⁵.

None of the documents specifically name Skerret[t]s Creek.

Names shown on plans and maps

The feature is named on official government maps from the 3rd edition of the NZMS 1 N164 (1967) topographic map and is consistently spelled with one [t]

¹ [Tararua History: Wainuiomata Place Name Origins](#) – last accessed 23 February 2022

² T Brooking (2014), *Richard Seddon: Kings of Gods Own*, Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books

³ *New Zealand Graphic*, 31 October 1891, p528

⁴ Trout fishing party at Smith's Whare in the Waterworks Valley, Wainuiomata. Halse, Frederick James, 1863-1936: Collection of negatives. Ref: 1/2-004086-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. [/records/22822206](#)

⁵ G. P. Barton. 'Skerrett, Charles Perrin', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, first published in 1996. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/3s21/skerrett-charles-perrin> (accessed 22 February 2022)

through to the current NZTopo50-BQ32 v1-08. No survey plans or older miscellaneous maps were found that name the feature.

Location of the feature, generic term, [geographic feature type](#)

The feature is a small stream that flows from the northern slopes of McKerrow generally northwards for 3km to its confluence with Wainuiomata River in Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt. The generic term 'Creek', which is used in the existing name and would be retained in the proposed name, is appropriate.

New Zealand Gazetteer, associated names, and duplication

[Skerrets Creek](#) is an official place name approved in 2019 under the region-by-region fast track programme. No comment on the spelling was received from mana whenua or Lower Hutt City Council at the time. Under the programme no research is conducted on the correct spelling of non-Māori names. This proposal gives effect to the proviso that anything approved may still be corrected under the Board's standard process.

There are no associated names in the Gazetteer or duplications of Skerrets or Skerretts with or without the possessive [s].

Research, history and references to the feature

The probate of Sir Charles Perrin Skerrett is online at Archives NZ⁶. The documents include his signature, which further confirms that Skerrett with two [t]'s is the correct spelling.

While other features in the vicinity are named for people alive at the same time as Skerrett, none appear to be directly associated, ie more trout fishers.

Consultation with iwi and others

Taranaki Whānui advised it had 'nothing to add on the matter'. To date there has been no response from Ngāti Toa Rangatira or Waiwhetū Marae.

Relevant section from the [NZGB Act 2008](#)

Section 3(e) provides the means for appropriate recognition to be accorded to cultural and heritage values associated with geographic features.

A function of the Board under section 11(1)(b) is to examine cases of doubtful spelling of names and determine the spelling to be adopted on official charts or maps.

[Standard for New Zealand place names](#) criteria

1.5 Orthographic standards

(d) The English possessive form should not be used. However, existing names with the possessive [s] that do not have the possessive apostrophe, have been in long-term use and have low public value will not be altered.

While the Standard discourages the possessive [s] the existing name with the [s] has been in long term use and the feature is not prominent.

1.6 Altered names

A name may be altered when it standardises the orthography. Any alteration should balance the cultural and historical significance of the name against long-term use and the practical need for location identification.

⁶ SKERRETT Charles Perrin, R23099489, Archives New Zealand, <https://collections.archives.govt.nz/web/arena/search#/item/aims-archive/R23099489/skerrett-charles-perrin> - last accessed 22 February 2022

Skerrets Creek has been in long term use (at least 53 years); however, a principal function of the Board is to correct the spelling of place names. If accepted, the minor alteration is unlikely to impact location identification as they are pronounced the same.

Concerns or issues for emergency services	The lower 800m of the feature flows by and through a suburban area. Further up, a small footbridge crosses the feature to connect to Whakanui Track, part of the network of tracks to and from the recreationally popular Ōrongorongo Valley. However, as the proposal is for a relatively minor spelling alteration and for a relatively minor feature, there would be no impact on emergency services.
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Media	Media attention is unlikely.
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Supporting information

1. Proposal to alter Skerrets Creek to Skerretts Creek – 17 December 2021
2. Emails from Taranakai Whānui – 22/23 February 2021