

# New Zealand Geographic Board public consultation for name proposals

14 May 2009

Public consultation opens today for several proposals to assign new place names or alter existing place names, including the proposal to change the city name Wanganui to Whanganui.

At its March meeting the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa accepted 27 proposals which it will now publicly consult on. The Board also declined and deferred a number of other proposals, and agreed to make amendments to previous gazettes.

It also made one final decision to name a locality Rangaiika, which is near Cape Kidnappers.

## Place name proposals for public consultation

The Board considered several proposals to assign new place names or alter existing place names, and has accepted 27 proposals that it will put forward for public consultation – these include:

- Assigning the new name Grafton Railway Station to a relocated railway station in central Auckland
- Altering the spelling of the city Wanganui to Whanganui
- Altering the spelling of Mākaro/Ward Island to include a macron
- Assigning the new names Lake Hood (near Ashburton) and Lake Opuha (near Fairlie) – these are both manmade lakes that are not formally named
- Altering the spelling of Mount Aitken to Mount Aitkin
- Formalising the locally used and recorded name The Catlins located in the South-eastern extremity of the South Island, and defining its bounded extent (the boundary).

## Public consultation process

Any member of the public can make submissions to the Board either supporting or objecting to these proposals. Submissions should be made in writing to the Secretary for the New Zealand Geographic Board.

All proposals have been publicly notified in the New Zealand Gazette, and public notices will be published in national and various relevant local newspapers, as well as on the LINZ website.

The consultation period for each of these proposals varies from one to three months.

The Board will consider all submissions (received before the end of the designated consultation period), at its next Board meeting, which is likely to be September or October this year.

## **Facilitating public views on ‘Whanganui’ proposal – new online form**

For the proposal to alter the spelling of Wanganui to Whanganui, the Board recognises and anticipates a high level of public comment, so has made available an online submission form to make it easy for people to provide their views.

The Board hopes to make this online submission form available in the future for other proposals.

Clarification - the Board’s consideration of alternative Māori names alongside the names North Island and South Island

Since the Board announced in April that it would consider alternative Māori names alongside the names North Island and South Island, there has been some confusion about what that means.

Public consultation has not started – this is expected to begin in 2010.

The Board is not looking to change or replace the English names ‘North Island’ and ‘South Island’.

The Board intends to formalise these long-standing names, while also having appropriate alternative Māori names. This means people could refer to the islands by the current and accepted English names ‘North Island’ and ‘South Island’, or by their Māori names (which are yet to be determined), or the English and Māori names together. Having alternative names provides for New Zealand’s heritage to be preserved in both languages - English and Māori.

The Board notes that while the names North Island and South Island are not official, this is not a significant issue given these names are commonly used and recorded on current maps. However, while the Board is considering alternative Māori names for the islands, it makes sense to formalise the English names at the same time.

The official or non-official status of a geographic feature or place is considered by the Board when people make name proposals to the Board - as has happened in this instance.

The Board has not decided on which Māori names will be proposed as alternatives, although it is aware of several Māori names that have been used in the past for both islands.

As part of the Board’s research, it is writing to iwi to collect traditional known Māori names. It will then decide which Māori names to put forward for public consultation in 2010, alongside the proposal to formalise the English names. Further information and details of the consultation dates will be provided closer to the time.

## **Further information about place naming and the New Zealand Geographic Board**

Visit the Land Information New Zealand website for information about place naming and the New Zealand Geographic Board:

[Place naming](#)

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