

New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

The memorial markers of the landscape

The New Zealand Geographic Board is New Zealand’s national place naming authority, responsible for official place names.

We run a public process to decide what places should be called—recognising the relationship we have with the land and its connection with our identity.

The New Zealand Geographic Board:

- has a responsibility to safeguard the geographic naming traditions, culture and heritage brought to New Zealand by its various communities;
- ensures its geographic naming work contributes to a geographic information system that provides economic, cultural, and social value to all New Zealanders;
- is steward (kaitiaki) and custodian of New Zealand’s official geographic names;
- is principal adviser to the New Zealand government on geographic names (official and unofficial) - especially to Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand, Te Arawhiti (the Office for Māori Crown Relations) and the Department of Conservation;
- consults with New Zealanders to take account of their views in its decision making;
- ensures its decision making and advisory capabilities are deployed where they can most benefit the longer term interests of New Zealand;
- ensures its decision making is independent and based on robust processes



Why are geographic names important to New Zealanders?

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

Why have official place 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 ensure consistency in the use of place 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

What is the standard proposal process?



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