

# 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 Tari Whakatau - the Office of Treaty Settlements and Takutai Moana 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



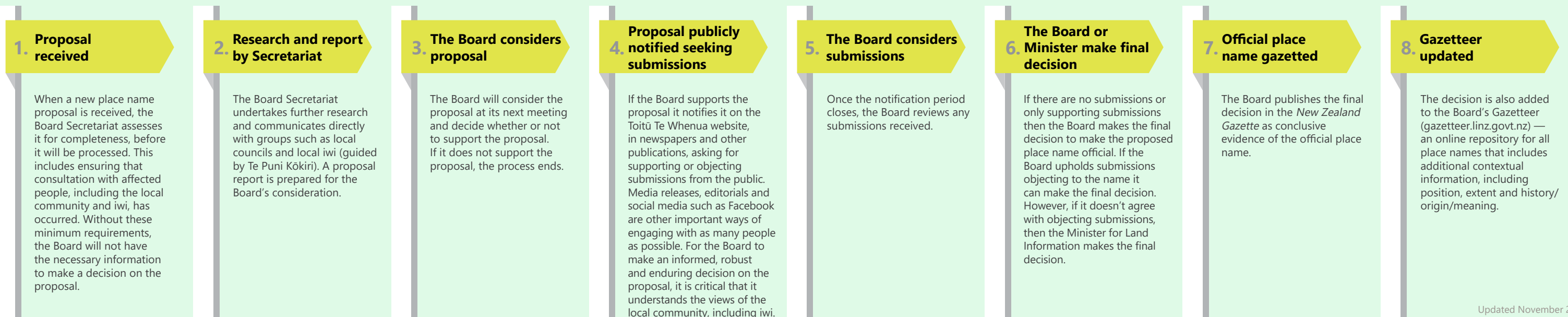
### Why are geographic names important to New Zealanders?

- 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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### What does the Board name?

- Places where people live, such as suburbs, town, localities and cities
- Physical geographic features of the landscape, whether natural or man-made
- Historic places where events occurred
- Undersea features on New Zealand’s continental shelf
- Antarctic features in the Ross Dependency
- Crown protected areas (Department of Conservation reserves). If the Board does not concur then the Minister of Conservation makes the final decision
- Territorial Authority districts and regions



### What does the Minister for Land Information need to do?

- Make final decisions on place name proposals when they’re referred by the Board
- Receive the Board’s Annual Report for tabling in the House
- Be the media spokesperson for controversial place name decisions
- Get advice from the Board on matters to do with official place names
- For local authority District and Region name alterations, recommend to the Governor General to amend the name of the relevant local authority to give effect to the alteration
- Appoint eight of the ten Board members:
  - four nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, New Zealand Geographical Society Inc, Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc and Local Government New Zealand
  - two recommended by the Minister for Māori Development
  - two others of the Minister for Land Information’s choice

### Other Ministers who decide official place names:

- Minister of Conservation for Crown protected area names
- Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations for Treaty names



### The Board

- Anselm Haanen**  
Chairperson, Surveyor-General, ex-officio
- Adam Greenland**  
National Hydrographer, Land Information New Zealand, ex-officio
- Paulette Tamati-Elliffe**  
Nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
- Robin Kearns**  
Nominated by New Zealand Geographical Society Inc
- Iaeen Cranwell**  
Nominated by Local Government New Zealand
- Cadence Kaumoana**  
Nominated by the Minister for Māori Development
- Mahana Toka**  
Nominated by the Minister for Māori Development
- Merata Kawharu**  
Appointed by the Minister for Land Information
- Jenni Vernon**  
Appointed by the Minister for Land Information
- Mick Abbott**  
Appointed by the Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand

### The Secretariat

- Wendy Shaw**  
Secretary, Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand
- Joanna Barnes-Wylie**  
Senior Advisor – Treaty Names, Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand
- Christopher Stephens**  
Advisor, Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand
- (the Secretariat researches, liaises, consults, engages and advises)

### Committees/Komiti

- Undersea Feature Names Committee**
- Antarctic Names Committee**
- Komiti Taunahatanga Māori**

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### What is the Treaty Names process?

