



## **Consulting with iwi and investigating Māori names**

The New Zealand Geographic Board (NZGB) Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa has a statutory requirement to collect and encourage the use of original Māori names where such names exist for geographic features.

The NZGB requires that proposers undertake dialogue with Māori before submitting a proposal to assign or alter a place name.

Open dialogue allows Māori to have meaningful input into the discussion, and enables education about the traditional histories associated with place names. This enables the NZGB to make robust decisions when considering whether to progress with proposals.

Māori communities are extremely diverse. Anyone wishing to engage with Māori on a name proposal should first find out which iwi or hapū has the mandate to represent the relevant tangata whenua.

This means identifying the major iwi groups in the relevant area, as well as their mandated and elected bodies. Tangata whenua themselves determine who may enter into dialogue, or has the authority to speak on behalf of others. Discussion with a number of iwi organisations or individuals may be the most appropriate method.

Engagement should be undertaken sincerely and honestly, with the kawa and tikanga (customs and protocols) of the concerned iwi being sought and followed.

Information on who to consult with is available from the NZGB, Te Puni Kōkiri and at <http://www.maorimaps.com/>.

Where the NZGB agrees to progress with a proposal, it will undertake its own consultation with Māori and iwi. This consultation should complement, not substitute, the proposer's own consultation.