**New Zealand Geographic Board**

**Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa**

The memorial markers of the landscape

The New Zealand Geographic Board (NZGB) 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 Land Information New Zealand, the Office of Treaty Settlements 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.

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### What is the standard proposal process?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Proposal received</strong></td>
<td>When a new place name proposal is received, the NZGB Secretariat assesses it for completeness, before it will be processed. This includes ensuring that consultation with affected people, including the local community and iwi, has occurred. Without these minimum requirements, the NZGB will not have the necessary information to make a decision on the proposal.</td>
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<td>2. <strong>Research and report by Secretariat</strong></td>
<td>The NZGB Secretariat undertakes further research and communicates directly with groups such as local councils and local iwi (guided by Te Puni Kōkiri). A proposal report is prepared for the NZGB’s consideration.</td>
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<td>3. <strong>NZGB considers proposal</strong></td>
<td>The NZGB will consider the proposal at its next meeting and decide whether or not to support the proposal. If it does not support the proposal, the process ends.</td>
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<td>4. <strong>Proposal publicly notified seeking submissions</strong></td>
<td>If the NZGB supports the proposal it notifies it on the LINZ website, in newspapers and other publications, asking for supporting or objecting submissions from the public with reasons. Media releases, editorials and social media such as Facebook are other important ways of engaging with as many people as possible. For the NZGB to make an informed, robust and enduring decision on the proposal, it is critical that it understands the views of the local community, including iwi.</td>
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<td>5. <strong>NZGB considers submissions</strong></td>
<td>Once the notification period closes, the NZGB reviews any submissions received.</td>
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<td>6. <strong>NZGB or Minister make final decision</strong></td>
<td>If there are no submissions or only supporting submissions then the NZGB makes the final decision to make the proposed place name official. If the NZGB upholds submissions objecting to the name it can make the final decision. However, if it doesn’t agree with objecting submissions, then the Minister for Land Information makes the final decision.</td>
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<td>7. <strong>Official place name gazetted</strong></td>
<td>The NZGB publishes the final decision in the New Zealand Gazette as conclusive evidence of the official place name.</td>
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<td>8. <strong>Gazetteer updated</strong></td>
<td>The decision is also added to the NZGB’s Gazetteer (gazetteer.linz.govt.nz) - an online repository for all place names that includes additional contextual information, including position, extent and history/origin/meaning.</td>
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**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

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**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
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What is the Treaty Names process?

1. Proposal received
   - The Office of Treaty Settlements gathers the required information from the claimant group and submits the Treaty name proposal to the NZGB. The story associated with the name is essential to determine correct orthography.

2. Review
   - The Office of Treaty Settlements is advised of any immediate concerns.

3. Research
   - The NZGB Secretariat researches the history of any existing place names.

4. NZGB consideration
   - NZGB recommendations are made to the Office of Treaty Settlements.

5. Final decision
   - The Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations makes the final decisions on name changes and restored names included in a list in the Deed Settlement. Settlement legislation is enacted making them official.

6. Post settlement
   - Official Treaty names are published in the New Zealand Gazette and newspapers. They are also added to the NZGB’s Gazetteer. Treaty names are protected from future changes.

What does the NZGB 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 NZGB 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 NZGB
- Receive the NZGB’s Annual Report for tabling in the House
- Be the media spokesperson for controversial place name decisions
- Get advice from the NZGB 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 NZGB 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 NZGB

Mark Dyer
Chairperson, Surveyor-General, ex-officio

Adam Greenland
National Hydrographer, Land Information New Zealand, ex-officio

Paulette Tamati-Elliffe
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu

Mike Roche
Nominated by New Zealand Geographical Society Inc

David Barnes
Nominated by Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc

Adrienne Staples
Nominated by Local Government New Zealand

Matanuku Mahuika
Recommended by Minister for Māori Development

Riki Gage
Recommended by Minister for Māori Development

Merata Kawharu
Recommended by Minister for Land Information

Jenni Vernon
Recommended by Minister for Land Information

* Appointed for three years from September 2016

The Secretariat

Wendy Shaw
Secretary, Land Information New Zealand

Ginny Leggett
Senior Advisor – Treaty Names, Land Information New Zealand

Jill Remnant
Advisor, Land Information New Zealand

Christopher Stephens
Advisor, Land Information New Zealand

NZGB Committees

Undersea Feature Names Committee
Antarctic Names Committee
Māori Names Committee

www.linz.govt.nz