

NEVADA STATE BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

MINUTES September 19, 2017

The meeting began at 9:37am, at the Great Basin Science Sample and Records Library at 2175 Raggio Parkway, Reno NV, 89512.

Board Members Present:

Skip Canfield, Chair, Nevada Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources
Christine Johnson, Executive Secretary – Nevada Historical Society (non-voting)
Linda Newman, University of Nevada, Reno – (voting alternate)
Cynthia Laframboise – Nevada State Library, Archives, and Public Records
Diane M. Lightwood – Nevada State Library, Archives, and Public Records (voting alternate)
Larry Schmidt, US Forest Service (alternate)
Paul Starrs, University of Nevada, Reno – Department of Geography
Daryl Crawford, Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
Catherine Magee, Nevada Historical Society – (voting alternate)
Robert (Bob) Stewart, US Bureau of Land Management (Retired)
John Burgess, Nevada Dept. of Transportation
Jack Hursh, Nevada Bureau of Mines & Geology
David Davis, Nevada Bureau of Mines & Geology (alternate)
Dan White, USFS (calling in)
Mike Boyles, NPS (calling in)

Absent:

Margaret (Peg) Rees, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Members of Public/Guests:

Lois Kane
Mike Kane
Lonnie Feemster – Reno, Sparks, & Las Vegas NAACP
Joshua Woodbury – Deputy Attorney General, Nevada Attorney General's Office
Bryan Stockton – Senior Deputy Attorney General, Nevada Attorney General's Office
Victor Henney
Sue Wyman
Terry Flynn
Jana Dunn
Mark Vollmer
Eric Moody – NSBGN Advisory Panel
Don Harper – US Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Jim Kattelman
Louis Forline – NSBGN Advisory Panel

1. Introductions and Approval of Agenda (for possible action)

Meeting called to order at 9:37am by Skip Canfield. Introductions made of attending Board members and guests. Chair Skip Canfield noted that item number 8 – Smalls Peak – is listed incompletely – should be listed as a renaming, and to err on side of caution, and to avoid violation of Open Meeting Law in Nevada, and with the advise of the Deputy Attorney Generals present, Smalls Peak hearing will be tabled until the January 2018 meeting. Discussion on process ensued. Motion to approve agenda made by Jack Hursh, seconded by John Burgess. Unanimous approval of agenda. Motion approved.

2. Public Comment (action not taken)

Pursuant to Nevada Open Meeting law, the NSBGN allows for public comment at the beginning and end of our meetings. Member of public - Jim Kattelman - attended because he saw an article in the paper regarding Jeff Davis Peak and spoke in opposition to the proposed name change. Lois Kane – member of George Family – family is honored that there is intent to honor her grandmother. Thanks board for the consideration. Contacted her uncle, last living son of Wuzzie George. She shared what she knows her uncle’s sentiments are on the naming: in the Paiute culture, you don’t speak the name of that person – and his suggestion was to perhaps name the place instead for Wuzzie George (although he doesn’t have a specific opposition to it), George Ridge is good, very general, but to name it in a way that denotes the person has passed. Also perhaps could name it for what the feature was for the people in the area – Wuzzie George used to call that place “Coyote Falls Down Ridge” – but this is not the proposal before the NSBGN. She is of a new generation, and supports her uncle’s thoughts on the idea, and restated that they are honored for the naming prospect. She supplied a letter of support for the naming of George Ridge. Lonnie Feemster (NAACP) stated support for renaming Jeff Davis Peak, stating Davis was responsible for the death of thousands of people. Robert Smalls (application to rename Davis Peak for Smalls Peak) was a hero, and will not speak in opposition to a Native American name (which is not before the NSBGN), but Smalls eventually became a U.S. Congressman, and is worthy of support.

3. Approval of Minutes of the May 16, 2017 meeting (for possible action)

Minor correction requested by Mr. Crawford as to tribal affiliation and representation, which will be made. Motion to approve minutes with these corrections from May 16, 2017 meeting made by Paul Starrs, seconded by Catherine Magee. One abstention, by Cynthia Laframboise, otherwise unanimous approval of the minutes. Motion approved.

4. Announcements, Chairman or Executive Secretary

From Executive Secretary Christine Johnson, two announcements: Council of Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA) 2018 annual conference will be held in June in Tacoma, Washington. Report on US Board actions: Booker Hot Springs and Pony Bob Peak are now official. From Chair Skip Canfield: values commitment of the members and work done by NSBGN, and also the participation of the public and proponents in the process. Thanks everyone for participation.

5. Announcements from Board Members

Cynthia LaFramboise mentioned that former board member and chair Jeff Kintop has researched Jeff Davis Peak, and found reference that the peak has had several other names applied to it until the 1980s, including Union Peak, and Wheeler Peak. Christine Johnson mentioned the (now) enacted Advisory Panel to the NSBGN. Mr. Stewart resigned his position and Don Harper assigned as replacement.

6. Protocol and Streamlining of NSBGN procedures update (for possible action)

Mr. Burgess mentioned that our procedures need to be more visible (process on naming in general). Mentioned that perhaps the steps should be on the website. Mr. Hursh mentioned he had recently updated the website to reflect this suggestion. Mr. White asked for clarification on terms and process (first/second hearings, and for possible action).

7. Pony Express Hill (first hearing - for possible action)

This is the first hearing for Pony Express Hill in Lander County. Application is complete, and NSBGN will do due diligence. Mr. White did research prior to meeting and wrote to U.S. Forest Service district ranger regarding Pony Express Hill, and is waiting for reply. There is a Pony Express ‘loop’ apparently, and Dr. Starrs is questioning the “loop” in what should otherwise be a straight line (trail was meant to be direct). Chair Skip Canfield reminds NSBGN members to bring their expertise to the next meeting on all items. Motion made by Jack Hursh, seconded by Cynthia Laframboise to forward to second hearing. No additional discussion, unanimous approval, no objections, and no abstentions. Motion passed.

8. Smalls Peak (first hearing - for possible action)

Due to agenda error and advice from Deputy Attorney General, this item tabled to January 2018 meeting for the first hearing. No discussion had.

9. Dunn Butte (first hearing - for possible action)

This is the first hearing for Dunn Butte in Washoe County. Jeff Dunn authored the State Highway map. Cartographer with the NV Dept of Transportation for 23 years, and this proposal is a commemorative name. The State Highway map design was created in 1999 by Mr. Dunn, and persists to this day. The level of detail is such that no one has seen fit to change it. The proposed name of Dunn Butte is in the very northwest corner of the state near the borders of California and Oregon. The Butte in 12-mile creek is a unique feature in the state, unnamed, and the feature matches the NSBGN standard definition of a butte. The map he created is the closest thing to an official State map that Nevada has and is published bi-annually – 1-2 million copies generated with each printing. Mr. Dunn was also involved with the re-designing of the Nevada State flag. Mr. Dunn was also a candidate for the Exec. Secretary of the NSBGN. Feature is on BLM land, and a small portion of the feature hits into private land, and we should reach out to the owners. Mr. White asked if Mr. Dunn had any direct association with the feature, and he mentioned that the name should have direct association with the feature. Mr. Hursh mentioned that the feature is located directly below where his name appears in the printed state line on the state map. NSBGN members mentioned that Mr. Dunn had association with the whole state. Guest Mark Vollmer (representing the Dunn Family) thanked the NSBGN for considering the name. George Wheeler (cartographer), John C. Fremont (cartographer/explorer) both have features named for them in Nevada. Motion made by Paul Starrs to forward item to second hearing, seconded by Jack Hursh. No additional discussion, unanimous approval, no objections and no abstentions. Motion passed.

10. Engeler Peak (second hearing - for possible action)

This is the second hearing for Engeler Peak in Humboldt County. High point in the Bilk Creek Mountains. Mr. Hursh gave synopsis: proponent represents family (Engeler Family), to commemorate the peak after her family who homesteaded in the King's River Valley in the 1950s. Dry-crop farming and new technologies were implemented in this area by the family and was part of an initiative by the state of Nevada to develop agricultural areas that otherwise did not have agricultural activity. Family was very bonded to this mountain. Peak is NOT in wilderness. Dr. Starrs reiterated the Engeler family's contribution to the case with the submission of many photographs and family history. Executive Secretary Christine Johnson reached out to the Humboldt County Commission and the nine tribes affiliated with the site location per the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) database, and no response was given. Chair copied this information to the Nevada Indian Commission and no response. Motion made by Paul Starrs to forward to the U.S. Board of Geographic Names with NSBGN support for naming. Seconded by Cynthia Laframboise. No additional discussion, unanimous approval, no objections, and no abstentions. Motion passed.

11. Whitebark Peak (second hearing – for possible action)

This is the second hearing for this feature. Proponent has proposed the name Whitebark Peak for the name of the high point in the Pine Forest Range in Humboldt County. The white bark pine grows prolifically there in the highest elevations, therefore is an appropriate name. However, the peak is in wilderness area, and the proponent knows the proposal should be withdrawn due to the Wilderness Act of 1964. The standing protocol is to follow the intent of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (no intrusion and application of names, save for safety issues and education). Dan White made mention that there are exemptions in favor of safety and education (which this might be). The NSBGN general discussion included requesting more information on why this would be educational (and therefore exempt), the proponent understands and respects the wilderness policy, and the NSBGN does not feel this is defensible. Exec. Secretary received no feedback from affiliated tribes or county officials. This feature falls in BLM wilderness. BLM member suggested tabling item until more information can be gathered, motion made by Don Harper to table this item until January meeting. Seconded by Jack Hursh. No additional discussion, unanimous approval, no objections, and no abstentions. Motion passed.

12. Quinn Peak (second hearing – for possible action)

This the second hearing for this feature in Humboldt County. Jack Hursh provided synopsis: this is the high point in the Jackson Mountains. Mr. Hursh mentioned the colloquial of “Queen” is Quinn, and King Lear peak is nearby at the southern end of the Jackson Mountains, and the desire to pair “King” with “Queen” is the reasoning. The Quinn River and Quinn River Valley is in the affiliated region. However, this feature as well is in BLM wilderness. Dan White did research, and found that Dan Dobbins Peak has been used for this peak, and is asking who the Quinn River Valley is named for. More research to be done on this item. No feedback from the Humboldt County Commissioners or affiliated tribes to the Exec. Secretary Christine Johnson. Motion made by Don Harper to table this item until more information can be gathered. Seconded by Paul Starrs. Further discussion – Chair asked whether U.S. Board on Geographic Names can provide more information on when a feature within wilderness can be named. NSBGN protocol over many years has been to reject any application for a name within wilderness. Clarification is needed from the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as to what criteria should be used that warrants a new name based on public safety, navigation or education. Dan White said it is a case-by-case basis based on safety, navigation or education. No additional discussion, unanimous approval, no objections, and no abstentions. Motion passed.

13. Wheat Peak, Churchill County (third hearing – for possible action)

This is the third hearing for this feature, in Churchill County, the high point in the Bunejug Mountains. Unnamed on maps, with no apparent local usage. This feature connects to item 12, insomuch as both are submitted by same proponent, and both features named for the women who worked together. Jack Hursh gave synopsis: this feature, Wheat Peak, to be named for Margaret Wheat, notable anthropologist from the University of Nevada, Reno – active in the area in the 1950s-1980s. The Bunejug Range where this feature is located gleaned its name from a mispronounced version of “junebug” by Margaret Wheat’s daughter in the 1960s (which has become the official name of the range in Nevada). Proponent wants to commemorate work of Margaret Wheat in naming this peak for her. Ms. Wheat wrote the “Arts of the Primitive Paiute, and contributed greatly to archaeological surveys in Nevada. No feedback received from Churchill County Commissioners or the affiliated tribes for this feature, save for communication from UNR anthropologists Emeritus Don and Kay Fowler substantiating Margaret Wheat’s importance and her great importance and contribution to academia with regard to documenting early Paiute life in Nevada. In this way, no opposition and only support for Wheat Peak. Motion to forward to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names with NSBGN support for naming consideration made by John Burgess, seconded by Catherine Magee. No further discussion, unanimous approval, no objections, and no abstentions. Motion passed.

14. George Ridge, Churchill County (third hearing – for possible action)

This is the third hearing for this feature, in Churchill County, unnamed on maps, with no apparent local usage. This feature connects to item 11, insomuch as both are submitted by same proponent, and both features named for the women who worked together. Synopsis given by Jack Hursh: this feature would be named for Wuzzie George, local Paiute woman and well-respected elder in their community. No feedback received from Churchill County Commissioners, and two letters of support were received from tribes for this feature (from the Walker River Paiute tribe and Ft. McDermitt Paiute/Shoshone tribe). This item was tabled last time due to NSBGN desire to reach out to family, and Lois Kane (granddaughter) spoke earlier in this meeting relaying her uncle’s perspective and her own, in general support. Daryl Crawford said Inter-Tribal Council has received to additional feedback and the organization is in favor of the name. Mr. Hursh relayed that his conversation with Ms. Kane was happy to learn that the name requirement for a person being deceased more than five years was a requirement, and further explained why a name with many words (e.g. Coyote Falls Down Ridge) cannot work given current naming standards. Motion to forward to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names with NSBGN support for naming consideration made by Daryl Crawford, seconded by Paul Starrs. No additional discussion, unanimous approval, no objections, and no abstentions. Motion passed.

15. Mount Hanna (review for possible action)

This is a review of the site and past vote – this item was sent back for clarification to the NSBGN by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. Jack Hursh stated that proponent (Dr. Eugene Smith at UNLV) has referred to this site as Mount Hanna in many publications. Triangulation station is Hanna. This site is in BLM wilderness, which the NSBGN did not realize when we heard this the first time. Discussion on how the name can be denied given that they predate the Wilderness Act of 1964. Dan White asked who Hanna and Sutor were (can we find out – seem like commemorative names). May have been surveyor’s names; Robert Stewart said no one would know that information now – surveying teams of the day just named sites as they went and as needed to progress with work at the time. U.S. Board on Geographic Names asked if Mr. Smith (proponent) can justify names. Proponent states that triangulation stations are there, the sites predate the Wilderness Act, and there are publications out that reference these peaks (for both items 15 and 16). Motion that based on predating the Wilderness Act, the presence of triangulation stations, and usage in research literature published by UNLV made by Paul Starrs (and to send publication list to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names), seconded by Cynthia Laframboise. No further discussion, unanimous approval, no objections and no abstentions. Motion passed.

16. Mount Sutor (review for possible action)

This is a review of the site and past vote – this item was sent back for clarification to the NSBGN by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. Jack Hursh stated that the proponent (Dr. Eugene Smith at UNLV) has referred to this site as Mount Sutor in many publications. Triangulation station is Sutor. Same discussion as in item 15.

Motion that based on predating the Wilderness Act, the presence of triangulation stations, and usage in research literature published by UNLV made by Paul Starrs (and to send publication list to U.S. Board), seconded by Dan White. No further discussion, unanimous approval, no objections and no abstentions. Motion passed.

17. Select tentative meeting place and date for January, 2018 meeting (for possible action).

Tentative meeting place selected for next meeting at the Great Basin Science Sample and Records Library at 2175 Raggio Parkway, Reno NV, 89512, on Tuesday, January 9th at 9:30am. Motion made by Jack Hursh, seconded by Catherine Magee. Unanimously approved, no objections, no abstentions. Motion passed.

18. Public Comments

Pursuant to Nevada Open Meeting law, the NBGN allows for public comment at the beginning and end of our meetings. Paul Starrs spoke as a member of the public – proposed that we thank Bob Stewart for his service on the board. Larry Schmidt mentioned that we should consider the RE-naming situation with regard to Jefferson Davis Peak (being in wilderness). Dan White mentioned that it is exempt given that it has a name.

19. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Skip Canfield to adjourn, seconded by Diane Lightwood. Unanimously approved, no objections, no abstentions. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:13am.