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CANADIAN BOARD ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Revision of

Regulations, Principles of
Nomenclature and By-laws

September, 1948



OTTAWA
EDMOND CLOUTIER, C.M.G., B.A., L.Ph.,
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Geographical Names Board of Canada
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CANADIAN BOARD ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Establishment

The Canadian Board on Geographical Names was established by Order in Council, P.C. No. 3324 of December 18, 1897, which was amended by Orders in Council, P.C. No. 2561 of December 14, 1899, P.C. No. 823, of March 6, 1947, P.C. No. 4692 of November 19, 1947, and P.C. 3397 of August 3, 1948.

Official Title

The official title of the Board is the Canadian Board on Geographical Names, hereinafter referred to as the Board.

Duties of the Board

The duties of the Board shall be to advise and rule on all questions concerning geographical names in Canada which arise in the departments of the public service of the Government of Canada, or in the public services of any province which has undertaken to be guided by the decisions of the Board, or which are referred to it from any other source. Also all questions concerning geographical names which arise in the departments of the public service shall be referred to the Board.

In the revision or adoption of geographical names, the Board will endeavour to:

- (a) ensure that the name of a particular place or feature is always spelled in the same way, and that names having the same origin shall be spelled identically;
- (b) minimize duplication of names in the same region;
- (c) correct discrepancies in geographical names appearing in various maps, charts and publications relating to Canada;
- (d) discourage the use of names which are in any way objectionable.

Statutory Names

- (a) The names of counties, townships, districts, reserves, parks or other legal divisions, cities, towns, and villages, as created by statutes, proclamations, orders in council, or other official Dominion or provincial governmental acts, establishing such counties, townships, districts, reserves, parks or other legal divisions or incorporating such cities, towns and villages, are adopted by the Board. Such of these names as may be considered by the Board will be entered in its records.
- (b) The statute, proclamation, order in council, or other official Dominion or provincial governmental act designating any of the names mentioned in the next preceding clause, shall be held to cancel any previous decision of the Board respecting such name so far as it affects the name of such county, township, district, reserve, park or other legal division, city, town or incorporated village.

CANADIAN BOARD ON GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

The Canadian Board on Geographical Names was established by Order in Council P.C. No. 2361 of December 18, 1957, which was amended by Order in Council P.C. No. 2361 of December 14, 1959, P.C. No. 293 of March 6, 1961, P.C. No. 2692 of November 19, 1967, and P.C. 2387 of August 8, 1968.

The official title of the Board is the Canadian Board on Geographical Names, hereinafter referred to as the Board.

Objects of the Board

The duties of the Board shall be to advise and rule on all questions concerning geographical names in Canada which arise in the departments of the public service of the Government of Canada, or in the public service of any province where such matters are referred to be ruled by the Board, or which are referred to it from any other source. All questions concerning geographical names which arise in the departments of the public service shall be referred to the Board.

In the revision or adoption of geographical names, the Board will endeavour to:

- (a) ensure that the name of a particular place or feature is always spelled in the same way and that names having the same origin shall be spelled identically;
- (b) maintain uniformity of names in the same region;
- (c) correct discrepancies in geographical names appearing in various maps, charts and publications relating to Canada;
- (d) discourage the use of names which are in any way objectionable.

Substantive Powers

The names of counties, townships, districts, reserves, parks or other local divisions, cities, towns, and villages as created by statute, government orders, orders in council or other official documents of provincial governments and other establishments, such as municipal, township, district, village, park or other local divisions of municipalities and other towns and villages, are referred to the Board, such of these names as may be referred to the Board will be entered in its records. The Board shall recommend to the appropriate authority the names to be used in the various government departments, and shall also recommend that the Board should refer to such names and numbers for as many as possible in all official documents, forms, reports, maps or other publications.

REGULATIONS

1. The following Regulations have been adopted for the guidance of mapping or charting Departments or similar organizations in submitting lists of names to the Board. Throughout these regulations whenever the words map or mapping are used they are intended to also mean chart or charting.

It is the duty of the map producing organization issuing a map or publication to provide the names which it deems requisite and to submit them to the Board. It shall be the duty of the Board to adopt or reject the names submitted; the Board may suggest additional, alternative, or new names. For individuals, or non-governmental organizations suitable forms for submitting names will be furnished by the secretary of the Board upon application. In submitting new names it shall be required that the origin of the name be provided by the organization or individual submitting the name.

2. For the purposes of these regulations, a map, the names for which have been adopted by the Board, shall be defined as an "official" map. In compilation, names from official maps shall be given primary weight, having due regard to the possibility of alterations being sanctioned during the period intervening since publication. Should variations appear between official maps in respect to the same feature, that bearing the latest date shall be assumed to be correct.

3. The map producing organization should submit names to the provincial member of the Board before submitting them to the Board, provided that the correspondence with such member, including his recommendations, and the discarded names, is transmitted to the Board when the names are submitted to it by the map producing organization.

4. Names submitted to the Board must be accompanied by a map showing the places or features for which names are submitted, together with a list of reference maps and publications consecutively numbered representing all available source data.

5. When the number of names submitted is large, it is desirable that the accompanying map(s) showing the features should be squared or gridded with marginal numbers reading vertically from the southwest corner, and marginal letters reading horizontally from the same point. On the list the location of each feature should be referred to the number of the square which includes it. Names themselves should be numbered consecutively on the list.

6. Unless the list of names has already been submitted by the map producing organization to the member of the Board for the province every list of names together with its accompanying map should be submitted to the Board in duplicate.

7. In submitting lists of names the following form should be used:

- Name— (Alternate spellings and names);
- Feature— (Lake, river, town, etc.);
- Authority— (Reference list number or name of publication, local usage, or, if new, by whom given);
- Location— (Name sheet grid identification);
- Remarks— (State origin of names, name preferred, or other pertinent data);

When the number of names is large they should be segregated in the list according to the kind of feature, such as lake, river, town, etc.

8. Name Categories—Names submitted should be categorized as:

ESTABLISHED NAMES

Definition:

- (a) Statutory names.
- (b) Names previously adopted by the Board (providing assurance exists that intervening changes have not occurred).
- (c) Names which have appeared on several Dominion or provincial maps without variation.

NEW NAMES

Definition:

- (a) Names proposed for use for the first time.
- (b) Names from publications or other sources which have not appeared on Dominion or provincial maps.

CONTENTIOUS NAMES

Definition:

- (a) Names which are duplicated, of doubtful orthography, contrary to local usage, of doubtful origin, of doubtful application, or controversial, or require revision.
- (b) Names which have appeared in varying forms on several maps and have not been ruled upon by the Board.

9. The name proposed to designate the map sheet shall be submitted to the Board for approval.

PRINCIPLES OF NOMENCLATURE

1. *Local use to have preference.*

Unless good and sufficient reasons to the contrary exist, that name which is in common local use shall be given preference over alternative names. Where a choice is offered between two or more names for the same place or feature, all sanctioned by local usage, that which is most appropriate should be adopted.

2. *Names corrupted or changed.*

A name which has been corrupted or changed should, if not too firmly established by usage, be restored to its original form.

3. *English possessive form.*

In English nomenclature, except in the case of statutory names, the possessive form should be avoided. If local usage demands a possessive, the addition of "s" may be permitted, but the use of the apostrophe is unnecessary.

4. *Names consisting of several words.*

In English nomenclature hyphenated names shall not be employed; names consisting of more than one word should be combined unless they are proper names, or unless the resultant combination appears abnormal or incongruous. The use of given name and surname, either as a combination or as two words, shall be discouraged.

5. *"Canyon" or "gorge".*

The form "canyon" or "gorge" shall be used in preference to canon or cañon.

6. *Branches of rivers.*

The practice of naming branches of rivers, "South branch", "North branch", "East fork", etc., is objectionable. The name of the main stream should, if practicable, be continued to the most distant source, and each branch given an independent name. In cases where this is not considered advisable owing to firmly established local usage the words "branch" or "fork" shall be omitted and the words "North", "South", "East", "West", or "Middle", as the case may be, shall be combined with the name of the main stream for the different branches, e.g., North Eel river, South Eel river, Middle Eel river, etc.

7. *Duplication of names.*

Duplication of names within one province is objectionable. This is particularly the case in regard to names suggested by peculiarities of the topographical features designated, such as their form, vegetation or animal life. Such descriptive names, therefore, as round, grass, cedar, bear, moose, fish, eagle, duck, clear, mud, etc., should not be used without the known support of local use, and the concurrence of the provincial representative; a number of descriptive names which are less common, such as many of the names applied to mountain peaks, e.g., cone, needle, bald, redtop, etc., are also undesirable.

8. *Personal names.*

Such names should be applied rarely and only those of eminence, of those who are prominently connected with the life, activities or development of any locality, should be thus honoured. Names of men now dead may be perpetuated, as it is seen fitting thus to honour them. Names of mountains called after persons should be preceded by the word "Mount" or by "Mt.", otherwise the word "Mountain" or "Mtn." should follow the name.

9. *French names in Canada.*

French names in Canada are to be spelled, accented, hyphenated, etc., according to the rules of the French language. In English text and map printing, however, hyphenation although recommended for French composite names, shall not be considered obligatory.

10. *English and French forms of a name.*

In cases where English and French forms of a single name have been published and have the sanction of long usage, no attempt shall be made to abolish either form, but both may be recognized and published in the Board's list of decisions, and it shall be deemed correct to use the English form in official documents in the English language and the French form in official documents in the French language. In all other cases, any duplication of form shall be discouraged and preference shall be given to the form which has priority of origin whether this be English or French.

11. *Descriptive terms—when to be translated.*

A generic descriptive term, such as cape, bay, river, etc., added to a name, may be translated into French for use in French publications. Likewise, the corresponding French term may be translated into English for use in English publications, but when such term is part of the name as in "Murray Bay", and "Deux-Rivières", it shall not be translated.

12. *Objectionable combination of words.*

As a general rule, the combination of words in different languages is objectionable.

13. *Names in foreign countries.*

Geographic names in a foreign country should be rendered in the form adopted by that country, except where there are English or French equivalents already fixed by usage, in which case the English equivalents are to be used in English publications, and the French equivalents in French publications.

14. *Indian and Eskimo names.*

Long Indian and Eskimo names are objectionable, but if the native name is short and euphonious they may be accepted. The true sound of the word in the native tongue shall be taken as the basis of the spelling. Persons suggesting such names should give their meanings. They should record them using vowels with their values in continental languages and consonants with their value in English.

Value of vowels:

- a as in father (not as in fate);
- e as in fete;
- i as in pique;
- o as in note;
- u as in rule (not as in but);

Diphthongs:

- ai as in aisle;
- ei as in vein;
- oi as in coin;
- au as in fault;

15. *Generic terms.*

(a) Appropriateness—Generic descriptive terms should be appropriate to the nature of the features concerned. Where not firmly established in local usage, inappropriate generics should be corrected.

(b) Position—In English nomenclature, the generic should follow the name, with the exception of "mount" or "mt." and "cape".

In French nomenclature, the generic should precede the name.

(c) The use of names without generics should be avoided.

16. *Railway and post office names.*

Railway station names should be identical with those shown in the Canadian Official Railway Guide. Post Office names should be identical with those shown in the Canada Official Postal Guide.

BY-LAWS

I. *Officers and Secretary of the Board.*

The officers shall consist of a chairman (who shall be elected by ballot), of an executive committee of three to be nominated by the chairman and approved by the Board, all of whom shall serve for one year or until their successors shall be chosen. An officer of the Department of Mines and Resources designated by the Minister shall act as secretary but shall not be a member of the Board.

II. *Duties of Officers.*

(a) The chairman shall preside at the meetings. He shall appoint all committees not specially named by the Board. In his absence, the Board shall have the power to elect a temporary chairman.

- (b) The executive committee shall receive, through the secretary, all communications requiring decision by the Board, shall investigate the questions presented, and shall report to the Board with recommendations for dealing with the questions.
- (c) Before the name of a feature within a province which is represented upon the Board is dealt with, the name shall be submitted to the member of the province for examination and report and the secretary shall enter upon every record submitted for the consideration of the Board the recommendation of the provincial member.

III. *Duties of Secretary.*

- (a) The secretary shall keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Board and shall record and certify the decisions or other acts of the Board. He shall maintain files of papers and correspondence relating to each case submitted to the Board, conveniently arranged for reference. He shall, under the instructions of the Board, conduct the general correspondence and shall receive communications presented for the consideration of the Board.
- (b) The secretary shall send a copy of the minutes of every meeting of the Board to each member as soon as possible after each meeting.
- (c) The secretary shall answer all correspondence relating to inquiries as to Board decisions without waiting for a Board meeting, but shall table such correspondence as may require the attention of the Board at the next following meeting.
- (d) The secretary shall secure all possible information from sources at his disposal relating to all communications requiring decisions by the Board, and shall transmit such information with the communications to the executive committee for action.
- (e) The secretary shall maintain a gazetteer of all names adopted by the Board.
- (f) The secretary shall draw to the attention of the Board any questionable geographical name that may come to his attention from time to time.
- (g) In cases where any department of the public service transmits to the Board, for a ruling, a question which they have received from the outside, the secretary shall communicate the Board's decision to the Department, who will transmit the decision to the inquirer.
- (h) The secretary shall maintain, for reference purposes, a complete set of all maps and charts issued by any Dominion or provincial department.

IV. *Meetings.*

- (a) The Board shall hold regular meetings on the first Thursday in each month. When the first Thursday comes on a holiday then the meeting is to be held on the following Tuesday. Special meetings may be called by the chairman or the executive committee. On the written request of any member filed with the secretary within a month from the date of a meeting, any decision adopted at such meeting shall be reserved for approval by a majority of the full Board. The affirmative vote of a majority of all the members of the full Board shall be required for the final decision in any such case; provided that the members or any of them may vote in writing.
- (b) Three members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.
- (c) All motions presented for the consideration of the Board shall be in writing.

(d) In the event that a member of the Board cannot attend a meeting, the chairman may authorize attendance of another representative of the department concerned. The chairman may also authorize the departmental deputy of a member of the executive to act for him on the executive in the event of an extended absence of said member of the executive.

V. Reports.

The Board shall publish in book or bulletin form, as may be found desirable, lists of names adopted, together with such additional supporting data as may be deemed requisite, on a regional basis. Such reports may be amended by supplements, the form and frequency of which the Board shall determine.

VI. Amendments.

These by-laws may be amended at any regular or special meeting by a majority vote of all the members of the Board, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been sent by the secretary to the members of the Board at least twenty days prior to the date of the meeting of the Board at which such amendments are to be voted upon.

GSC/CGC OTTAWA



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