

# **SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES**



## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS GEOGRAPHIC FEATURE NAMES**

Updated – July 1, 2020

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The South Dakota Board on Geographic Names (SDBGN) shall investigate any proposed names, solicit public input and make a recommendation to the United States Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) as to whether the board supports a new or replacement name. The board may establish procedures and standards to recommend, evaluate, and select geographic place names by rules promulgated pursuant to chapter 1-26. The rules shall be compatible with the standards of the USBGN as contained in its manual, Principles, Policies and Procedures: Domestic Names, Reston, Virginia, 2016. ([https://geonames.usgs.gov/docs/pubs/DNC\\_PPP\\_DEC\\_2016\\_V.2.0.pdf](https://geonames.usgs.gov/docs/pubs/DNC_PPP_DEC_2016_V.2.0.pdf)).

The SDBGN is comprised of representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Tourism, Department of Tribal Relations, Department of Transportation and State Historical Society.  
SDBGN will issue press releases statewide.

SDBGN will post information on the State's Boards and Commissions website.

The board may hold a board meeting in city(s) near the geographic feature with a name under review to solicit public comment for local citizens. The board reserves the right to add additional meeting sites as deemed necessary to solicit public comment.

Board meetings will be scheduled in coordination with the timeline for the public involvement process for each feature under review by the board. And the meetings will be scheduled in an accessible location.

If there are no geographic features' names for review, the board will meet once a year at the call of the Chair.

## ***PROCESS FOR REVIEWING A REQUEST FROM THE PUBLIC OR US BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES TO CONSIDER A RECOMMENDING TO THE STATE LEGISLATURE THAT THE GEOGRAPHIC NAME IS OFFENSIVE OR INSULTING***

The board will not act on the request to consider a name offensive or insulting unless a written official request is received. And in the case of an official request to consider a name as offensive or insulting, the SDBGN will solicit the public and interested parties to see if there support for the recommendation.

### **1. Notify Public and Interested Parties of Request to recommend a name as offensive or insulting to the State Legislature and Solicit any Other Additional Potential Support or Objections to the request**

- a. Identify the various entities to solicit. The list may include any or all the following potential contacts:
  - i. County Governments
  - ii. City Governments
  - iii. Tribal Governments
  - iv. Minority Contacts
  - v. Local Historical Societies
  - vi. Interested Parties
  - vii. State Legislators
  - viii. News Media (Statewide & Local to Geographic Feature)
- b. Draft written notice including information about the geographical site; public comment period deadline; contact information to submit public comments and map denoting location
- c. Disseminate written notice to identified parties of interest
- d. Issues press release to media requesting public comment on the recommendation to have the name considered offensive or insulting
- e. Public Comment period during initial solicitation period is 45 days from date written notice is issued

### **2. Following Public Comment Period**

- a. SDBGN will review the request, public comment and supporting documentations
- b. SDBGN will submit the request to the State Legislature to determine if the name is offensive or insulting
  - i. If the state legislature finds the name to be insulting or offensive, the board will follow its process to recommend a new name for the feature to the USBGN
  - ii. If the state legislature does not determine the name to be offensive or insulting, the matter will be closed.

# ***PROCESS FOR RECOMMENDING NEW NAME FOR GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES WITH OFFENSIVE NAMES (AS DEEMED BY THE STATE LEGISLATURE)***

## **1. Solicit Potential New Name for Geographic Feature**

- a. Identify the various entities to solicit. The list may include any or all the following potential contacts:
  - i. County Governments
  - ii. City Governments
  - iii. Tribal Governments
  - iv. Minority Contacts
  - v. Local Historical Societies
  - vi. Interested Parties
  - vii. Local State Legislators
  - viii. News Media (Statewide & Local to Geographic Feature)
- b. Draft written notice including information about the geographical site; public comment period deadline; contact information to submit public comments and map denoting location – commentators will be directed to the US Board on Geographic Names Policy document (<http://geonames.usgs.gov/domestic/policies.htm>) to maximize potential that suggested names will meet federal requirements for final approval by the US Board
- c. Disseminate written notice to identified parties of interest
- d. Issues press release to media requesting public comment on a proposed name for the geographic feature
- e. Public Comment period during initial solicitation period is 45 days from date written notice is issued
- f. Following Public Comment Period – SD Board on Geographic Names will review comments and suggested names for geographic feature

## **2. Multiple Names Recommended during Public Comment Period**

- a. Send written notice to identified parties of interest to notify them of the recommended names for geographic feature and ask for additional comments regarding the names proposed and rationale for support or opposition to the proposed names
- b. Issue press release to media requesting public comment on proposed names
- c. Public comment period during the review of proposed names is 45 days from date written notice is issued
- d. Following Public Comment Period SD Board on Geographic Names will review comments on proposed names and make final recommendation on name to be proposed.
- e. Written notice of the recommended new name will be sent to identified interested parties for final 30-day comment period

- f. Following Public Comment Period – SD Board on Geographic Names will review comments and suggested names for geographic feature
      - i. Administrative Review of proposed name
      - ii. If no opposition is received to recommended new name, a final vote is taken and the recommendation is submitted to US Geographic Name Board
      - iii. If opposition is received to recommended new name, the SD Board on Geographic Names will review opposition and make recommendation on how to proceed based on the public comment received
- 3. One recommended new name for Geographic Feature during Public Comment Period**
- a. Written notice of the recommended new name will be sent to identified interested parties for final 30-day comment period
  - b. Issue press release to media requesting public comment on proposed name
  - c. Following Public Comment Period – SD Board on Geographic Names will review comments
    - i. Administrative Review of proposed name
    - ii. If no opposition is received to recommended new name, a final vote is taken and the recommendation is submitted to US Geographic Name Board
    - iii. If opposition is received to recommended new name, the SD Board on Geographic Names will review opposition and make recommendation on how to proceed based on the public comment received
- 4. No recommended Name for Geographic Feature during Public Comment Period**
- a. SD Board on Geographic Names will conduct historical research on the feature and based on that research will recommend new name for geographic feature
  - b. The Board will document sources of research and generate narrative to support new name to include in written notice to identified interested parties
  - c. Written notice of the recommended new name will be sent to identified interested parties for final 30-day comment period
  - d. Issue press release to media requesting public comment on proposed name
  - e. Following Public Comment Period – SD Board on Geographic Names will review comments
    - i. Administrative Review of proposed name
    - ii. If no opposition is received to recommended new name, a final vote is taken and the recommendation is submitted to US Board on Geographic Names

- iii. If opposition is received to recommended new name, the SD Board on Geographic Names will review opposition and make recommendation on how to proceed based on the public comment received

## ***PROCESS FOR REVIEWING REQUEST FROM THE PUBLIC OR U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES TO NAME UNNAMED FEATURES***

The board will not act on unnamed features unless an official request is received. And in the case of an official request to name an unnamed geographic feature, the SDBGN will solicit the public and interested parties to see if there are any other additional suggested names for the unnamed geographic features.

### **1. Notify Public and Interested Parties of Request to Name Unnamed Feature and Solicit any Other Additional Potential Names for Feature**

- a. Identify the various entities to solicit. The list may include any or all the following potential contacts:
    - i. County Governments
    - ii. City Governments
    - iii. Tribal Governments
    - iv. Minority Contacts
    - v. Local Historical Societies
    - vi. Interested Parties
    - vii. Local State Legislators
    - viii. News Media (Statewide & Local to Geographic Feature)
  - b. Draft written notice including information about the geographical site; public comment period deadline; contact information to submit public comments and map denoting location – commentators will be directed to the US Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) Policy document (<http://geonames.usgs.gov/domestic/policies.htm>) to maximize potential that suggested names will meet federal requirements for final approval by the US Board
  - c. Disseminate written notice to identified parties of interest
  - d. Issues press release to media requesting public comment on a proposed name for the geographic feature
  - e. Public Comment period during initial solicitation period is 45 days from date written notice is issued
2. Following Public Comment Period – SD Board on Geographic Names (SDBGN) will review comments and suggested names for geographic feature
- a. SDBGN will review name proposed and supporting document. If more than one name is proposed, the board will research and vote on one name to recommend to the USBGN
  - b. Written notice of the recommended new name will be sent to identified interested parties for final 30-day comment period

- c. Issue press release to media requesting public comment on proposed name
- d. Following Public Comment Period – SD Board on Geographic Names will review comments
  - i. Administrative Review of proposed name
  - ii. If no opposition is received to recommended new name, a final vote will be taken and recommendation will be submitted to U.S. Board on Geographic Names.
  - iii. If opposition is received to recommended new name, the SD Board on Geographic Names will review opposition and make recommendation on how to proceed based on the public comment received

***PROCESS FOR REVIEWING REQUEST FROM THE PUBLIC OR U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES TO RENAME GEOGRAPHIC FEATURE NOT CONSIDERED TO BE INSULTING OR OFFENSIVE***

The SDBGN will not take formal action on any request or make any recommendation on a request to rename a feature when the name is not considered offensive or insulting. If the SDBGN receives the request directly from the public, it will forward the request on to the USBGN with no recommendation.

If the request comes from the US Board on Geographic Names, the SDBGN will notify the USBGN that state law does not give the SDBGN the authority to take any action on renaming features unless the name has been deemed offensive or insulting the South Dakota Legislature.

If the board feels the current name of the feature may be deemed offensive or insulting, it will follow the procedure adopted on page 3 of this document.