

Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board

Department of Environment and Conservation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

2009-10 Annual Activity Report



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1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board (NLGNB) achieved very significant progress during the year 2009-10 as is indicated by its specific activities and achievements outlined in this report. As in previous years, the Board had active consultations with provincial government departments and other public agencies on geographical names issues. This year, for example, a delegation from the Innu Nation attended a meeting in December to discuss the potential adoption of Innu Place names related to the Trans Labrador Highway. Following this consultation the Innu submitted (4) place name changes for consideration all of which the Board approved. The Innu also indicated that they have more than 500 place names which they propose to submit during the upcoming year. Another highlight of the year was the progress to formally establish a systematic commemorative naming program.

During 2009-10, the Board reviewed 161 names recently acquired from private field surveys. Among these the Board acknowledges with gratitude submissions of names by Dr. Maureen Woodrow and Dr. Derek Smith which they collected from residents in the Change Islands area. The Board also received a collection of feature names in the central Newfoundland area from Mr. Ron Penny. These names were originally recorded on forest inventory maps compiled by the Price Newfoundland Pulp & Paper Limited (Woodlands Division) in Grand Falls with whom Mr. Penny was employed. These Board recommendations now await Ministerial approval.

Currently, the NLGNB operates without an allocated budget to conduct an active geographical names fieldwork program. Rather, as previously it continues to rely on individuals and groups to collect and submit new names, or recommend changes to existing toponymy (place-names) on a voluntary basis. As a matter of Board policy these activities, however, are always carefully guided and monitored by our Administrative Officer/Secretary and reviewed regularly at Board meetings to insure that submissions meet the required naming standards.

As Chair, I want to recognize and express thanks to the Board members for their support in achieving our goals. At this particular time, I would like to acknowledge and express gratitude for the genuine interest taken, and the good work, done by members of the NLGNB whose respective appointments terminated on December 31, 2009. During their tenure very significant strides were made in developing a commemorative naming program and undertaking other initiatives aimed at making our program more relevant to preserving our cultural heritage and promoting our social and cultural well-being. The increasing involvement of Innu Nation and Inuit as proactive partners with the Board represents case in point. Again, I feel obligated to commend, on behalf of the Board, the stellar work of our Administrative Officer/ Secretary, Mr. Randy Hawkins. Largely because of his strong sense of duty, the NLGNB possesses one of the most progressive geographical names programs of any province or territory in Canada.

As Chair, I can attest that the Board is accountable for the results reported in this document.



W.G. Handcock
Professor Emeritus in Geography
Chair

2. BOARD OVERVIEW

2a. Mandate and Lines of Business

The Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board (NLGNB) is appointed by the Minister of the Department of Environment and Conservation for a three (3) year term. The administration of the NLGNB falls under the Director of Surveys and Mapping, Lands Branch, Department of Environment and Conservation. The work of the NLGNB is supported by an Administrative Officer, who is an employee within the Surveys and Mapping Division.

The main responsibility of the NLGNB is to administer the *Geographical Names Act* (CHAPTER G-3; 1991 c29 s2).

The Act empowers the board with the following duties:

- The collection and recording of information on the names of places and geographical features;
- consultation with government and agencies on the selection of place names, or the renaming of places and features;
- considering and making changes to existing names;
- collaboration with the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) on naming standards, practices and principles;
- holding public meetings or inviting submissions where disputes arise over names and naming practices; and
- recommend to the Minister for approval the official names of places and geographical features.

Section 7 of the *Act* also empowers the NLGNB as the final authority on the spelling and pronunciation of the names of settlements and geographical features in the Province. Section 9 of the *Act* stipulates that where a provision in the Act is inconsistent or conflicts with a provision, term or condition of the *Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement Act*, the provision, term or condition of the latter shall have precedence over the provision of the *Geographical Names Board Act*.

2b. Representation

All meetings are held in St. John's. With the exceptions of the Chair and Mr. Stanley Clinton, all members of the NLGNB are public servants. Meetings are normally scheduled to coincide with times when the member for Labrador is in St. John's for other meetings. With the exception of the Chair, there are no remuneration provisions for the Board.

Name	Role	Agencies
Dr. W. Gordon Handcock	Chair	Professor Emeritus in Geography, MUN
Mr. Gary Smith	Vice Chair	Manager, Sailing Directions Publication, Canadian Hydrographic Service, DFO
Randy Hawkins	Secretary	Administrative Officer, SMD, Lands Branch, Environment and Conservation
Ms. Kathy Michelin	Member	Senior Policy Analyst, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
Mr. Stanley Clinton	Member	Director, Urban and Rural Planning Division, Municipal Affairs (Retired)
Ms. Linda Badcock	Member	Historic Sites Officer, Tourism, Culture and Recreation

2c. Vision

The vision of the Department of Environment and Conservation is a clean, sustainable environment and healthy, resilient ecosystems in perpetuity for the social, physical, cultural, biological and economic well-being of the Province. The *Geographical Names Board Act*, G-3, RSNL 1990, promotes the cultural aspect of this vision.

The vision of the NLGNB is to record and preserve the oral and written geographical names for functional use and as an important part of our cultural heritage. These names are made official for use in all government correspondence and documents, published literature, research reports, newspapers and magazines, road signs, public buildings and maps and charts throughout the Province.

2d. Mission

By 2011, The NLGNB will have made recommendations to Government in relation to any new geographical features and place names.

Performance Measure: Made recommendations to Government.

Indicator:

- Processed naming recommendations from the general public and other stakeholders.

3. SHARED COMMITMENTS

As previously indicated, the success of the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Program in 2009-10 was largely due to cooperative working partnerships between provincial and federal government agencies. The following partners played an active role in operational procedures this year:

- The Earth Sector of Natural Resources Canada and the GNBC Secretariat, in providing direct access to the federal database.

- Parks Canada, with respect to the names of geographical names in Terra Nova and Gros Morne National Parks.
- The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, with respect to names of coastal and underwater features and fishing grounds around Newfoundland and Labrador.
- The provincial Department of Natural Resources, in providing assistance in the collection and verification of geographical names in the southern Labrador area.
- The provincial Department of Transportation and Works, in respect to names of geographical features along the route of the Labrador Highway.
- The provincial Department of Municipal Affairs, in respect to names of incorporated towns and local service districts.
- The provincial Department of Tourism, Cultural and Recreation, in respect to names of geographical features on tourist and touring maps.
- The provincial Department of Environment and Conservation, in respect to provincial parks and natural areas.
- The provincial Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, in respect to names of geographical features in the Land Claim areas.
- The Nunatsiavut Government, in respect to names of geographical features in the Inuit Land Claims area.
- The Innu Nation, in respect to names of geographical features in the Innu Land Claims area.

Additionally, the success of the NLGNB's program is primarily due to the cooperation and assistance of the local residents within our Province.

4. HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A total of 161 geographical feature names have been reviewed in the 2009-10 fiscal year. These recommendations are now pending Ministerial approval.

Another important event was the proclamation of the Bartlett Basin by Premier Danny Williams. The event, which was part of the 2009 Bartlett Celebrations, was held in Brigus, Conception Bay. The Canadian Hydrographic Service produced a commemorative chart which added to the success of the event. Dignitaries from all level of government were in attendance.

As a result of recent discussions with the Innu Nation, the NLGNB has received a letter of intent to submit in excess of 500 aboriginal names in Labrador in the next fiscal year. These geographical place names originated from the www.innuplaces.ca website, which was originally launched in November of 2008. The letter of intent from the Innu Nation represents a milestone achievement in the processing of aboriginal place names in this Province.

5. OUTCOMES

The NLGNB will be reporting on the same objectives and indicators each year as indicated in the 2008-11 Activity Plan.

This section provides the results of work performed over the past year on the objectives as outlined in the NLGNB's 2008-11 Activity Plan. Each objective pertains to an issue of key importance to the NLGNB. In most cases, NLGNB have been successful in achieving results on the planned activities. Where an indicator has not been fully met, an explanation is provided.

Issue 1: Data Integrity and Management

With the advent of better mapping and computer technologies, standards for data management are continually changing. The NLGNB strives to ensure that the provincial dataset is up to date with the current standards.

Objective 1: By March 31, 2010, the NLGNB will focus on the improvement of our provincial geographical names dataset to ensure that it meets with existing Canadian national standards.

Performance Measure: Improvement of the provincial geographical names dataset.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Geographical names collected and entered in dataset.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">244 new provincial records were uploaded to the federal dataset in the 2009-10 fiscal year.Google Earth is now being used as a very efficient medium for contacting new informants and for the verification of new and existing geographical features and place names.Significant modifications have been made to the output files from the federal dataset. All official records in Canada are now able to be displayed in Google Earth through the use of keyhole mark up language (kml) files. Several of the core data fields within the federal dataset can now be viewed by jurisdictional offices within Canada. These files can be made available to the general public on a limited basis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Revisions made to current names in dataset.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A total of 860 existing database records were edited and uploaded to the federal dataset in the 2009-10 fiscal year.This total would also include any positional coordinate updates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Revisions made to feature coordinates to improve accuracy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Coordinate updates are necessary to improve the accuracy of our geographical features and place names. Coordinates adjustments often take place as a direct result of new

	<p>information from members of the general public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 250 positional coordinate updates for existing provincial records were added to the federal dataset in 2009-10.
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Issue 2: Digital Delineation

Digital delineation is a new and precise method of mapping the geometry of a given geographical feature or place name. Many of the geographical features in the Province are based on point locations. Digital delineations of these features will enable feature geometries to be identified. While much of the water features have already been identified as part of the national hydrology layer, many of the inland and coastline features of the Province still need to be captured digitally. These standards are developed on a national level and the work will require several years to complete.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2010, the NLGNB will have implemented a digital delineation process in accordance with nationally recognized guidelines.

Performance Measure: Implementation of digital delineation process.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features delineated digitally and entered into a geometry database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The major focus of 2009-10 was the development of a definitive strategy for the digital delineation of geographical features. At the request of the Canadian Council of Geomatics (CCOG), the Geographical Names Board of Canada initiated a working group on digital delineation. • The purpose of the working group was to develop a “best practices blueprint” for the digital delineation of geographical features. • The Working Group on Digital Delineation held two teleconferences throughout 2009-10. This group produced a Toponymy Data Inventory Data Model which will be submitted to the CCOG Steering Committee for evaluation. • Digital delineation will commence as soon as the review of existing federal protocols has been completed.

Issue 3: Commemoration Naming Program

The Province currently does not have a commemorative naming program for place names. However, the development of a commemorative naming program is timely because the NLGNB

has been approached by other agencies to assist with the commemoration of certain historical events.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2010, the NLGNB will work on a strategy for a provincial Commemorative Naming Program.

Performance Measure: Work progressed on strategy.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research conducted on existing programs in Canada. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional research has been done in the area with respect to a regional commemorative naming policy in the past year. Our previous plan to develop this issue from a regional perspective was put on hold when the NLGNB was approached by the Innu Nation with a request for assistance in the clarification of existing policy issues in the use of aboriginal names in the proposed Innu Land Claim area. • As a result of this request, the NLGNB opted to give priority to the renewal of discussions surrounding the use of aboriginal names in the proposed Innu Land Claim areas in Labrador. The resulting discussions took place during the final meeting of the NLGNB in this fiscal year. • The NLGNB will, investigate other regional commemorative naming policy stakeholders in the 2010-11 fiscal year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names proposed to provincial and federal jurisdictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no commemorative names proposed to the provincial or federal jurisdictions in the 2009-10 fiscal year.

Issue 4: Communication

Communication has become an issue since the work of the NLGNB has gained a higher profile due to increased use of the internet and an increased number of inquires from the public about the Province’s place names.

Objective 4: By March 31, 2010, the NLGNB will have increased the visibility and profile of the Board.

Performance Measure: Increased visibility and profile.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web page updated and maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current divisional website has been updated. • Additional links may be added in the next year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacts made with new informants in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NLGNB has made contact with the Innu Nation with respect to aboriginal names usage in Labrador. Upon

<p>the interior of Labrador and other areas in the Province.</p>	<p>submission from the Innu Nation, the NLGNB will be evaluating in excess of 500 Innu place names during the next fiscal year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NLGNB has received naming submissions from the Grand Falls Windsor area of the Province. Some of these submissions have already been processed. The remaining submissions will be processed during the 2010-11 fiscal year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of speaking engagements on the NLGNB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretary gave a presentation on the Preservation of the Innu Culture to the Geographical Names Board of Canada. The presentation highlighted the problems associated with the preservation of the Innu culture. The www.innuplaces.ca website was also highlighted. • The Secretary gave a presentation on the proclamation of the Bartlett Basin by Premier Danny Williams to the Geographical Names Board of Canada. • The Board invited a delegation from the Innu Nation to a meeting to discuss aboriginal name usage along Phase III of the Trans Labrador Highway. Significant progress was made in the process for the adoption of aboriginal names. Additional aboriginal names will be under consideration during the 2010-11 fiscal year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles published. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no articles published in the period of this report as no issues of specific interest arose.

6. ACTIVITIES

6a. Progress on current activities:

In the 2009-10 fiscal year, three (3) NLGNB meetings were held, and while a total of 161 geographical features were recommended for Ministerial adoption, those names had not been approved prior to the end of the fiscal year. As a result, these names will not be officially adopted until the 2010-11 report period.

In this report period, the Board processed submissions in the areas of Change Islands and the Grand Falls Windsor areas of the Province. Significant progress was also made in the processing of aboriginal names as well. Both the Innu Nation and the NLGNB have agreed to collaborate on the approval of four (4) place name changes in the proposed Innu Land Claim area of Labrador. These recommendations are pending Ministerial approval.

During the 2009-10 fiscal year, the following new names and name changes were adopted:

- Main River Waterway was adopted under the *Provincial Parks Act*.
- The Local Service District of Random Sound West was adopted under the *Municipalities Act*.
- The Local Service District of Burnt Cove – St. Michaels – Bauline South was a name change under the *Municipalities Act*.
- There was one additional name change in the form of a Joint Decision between Parks Canada and the Province in Gros Morne National Park. Fourth Pond was changed to Flagstaff Pond.

6b. General Inquiry Statistics:

The following statistics are estimated:

2009-10 Inquiry Types	
General public requests for information	50
GNBC Secretariat requests between federal and provincial offices	300
Provincial Government requests	50
New names or name change requests	6
Historical origin inquiries resolved by Dr. Gordon Handcock	35
Raster Amendment Map Requests	60

7. OPPORTUNITIES and CHALLENGES

Enhance the current web mapping services using direct access to CGNS data as support layers in specific user applications.

- Implement the use of Google Earth as a method of contacting new informants for geographical naming information within the Province.
- Initiate a GIS process for feature delineations of Newfoundland and Labrador records.
- Continue with the coordinate revision project.
- Establish protocol between the aboriginal communities and the NLGNB in anticipation of a large submission from the Labtop Innu Names project.
- Continue the development and maintenance of a provincial geographical names program website.

8. FISCAL STATEMENTS

The Board is not required under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* to provide an audited financial statement.

Statement of Expenditures		
NLGNB Expenditures	Total 2009-10 Expenditures	Projected 2010-11 Expenditures
Professional Services (Chair)	\$4688.85	\$5,500.00
Meeting Accommodations	\$539.90	\$1,000.00
Totals	\$5228.75	\$6,500.00

The above stated Expenditures and Projection are certified correct.