



**MINUTES
FOR THE MEETING OF THE
HAWAII BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES**

DATE: February 28, 2013
TIME: 1:00 pm
PLACE: Leiopapa A. Kamehameha Building
Office of Planning, 6th Floor Conference Room
235 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Arthur Buto, Manager of the Hawaii GIS Program, called the meeting of the Hawai'i Board on Geographic Names (HBGN or Board) to order at 1:10 pm.

The following were in attendance:

MEMBERS: Arthur Buto (Office of State Planning), Betty Kam (Bernice P. Bishop Museum), Holly McEldowney (Department of Land and Natural Resource), Ryan Morales (Land Survey Division), and Noenoe Silva (University of Hawai'i)

ABSENT: Kamaano Mills (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands) and Kamoia Quitevis (Office of Hawaiian Affairs)

ADVISORS: Naomi Losch (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, retired), Renee Louis, PhD

OTHERS: Melia Lane-Kamahele (Pacific Islands Office, National Park Service), Natalie Gates (Haleakalā National Park)

Before proceeding with the agenda, Mr. Buto reported on his meeting with Jessie Souki, Director of the Office of State Planning, to review meeting procedures of the HBGN and dissemination of the Board's decisions. Mr. Souki requested that the Board organize itself according to Chapter 4E-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and conduct its meetings in accordance with the state's public agency meetings and records law, Chapter 92, HRS.

The law establishing the Board, Chapter 4E-2, HRS, states that the representative of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) shall serve as the board secretary. Ms. McEldowney will now be responsible for preparing the Board's meeting minutes. It also states that DLNR will publish an annual report of the Board's decisions for that year. Under §4E-2, HRS, the Board will select one of its members to serve as chairperson. The Board agreed that the minutes and database (i.e., spreadsheets) used to track the Board's review of official place names and any decisions related to those names and the annual report will be posted on the Board's website as public notification of its decisions. Also posted will be a key explaining the terms and abbreviations used during the decision-making process and on the spreadsheets.

After a discussion of options, Arthur Buto agreed to serve as chairperson given that he already performs many functions of the office, including setting the agenda and distributing information to the members. Under §4E-2, HRS, the chairperson is to serve for 4 years or until another chairperson is selected. Mr. Buto confirmed that four out of the Board's seven members constitutes a quorum. Under the statute, all state departments must use names and spellings approved by the Board unless that name is contrary to a legally established name.

On the federal level, the primary role of the Board is to make recommendations to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) when it believes place names on the U.S.G.S Quads need correcting or when name changes are proposed. All name corrections recommended by the Board, such as approved use of diacritical marks, are forwarded to the BGN for inclusion in its Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). This is the database of all official place names in the United States. Members of the public or agencies sometime ask the Board to officially recognize a name correction or change. All federal agencies are required to use place names officially recognized by the BGN, including those HBGN recommendations that are accepted by the BGN.

Ms. Noenoe Silva, a new Board member, was introduced. She represents the President of the University of Hawai'i and replaces Naomi Losch who recently retired from the University. Ms. Losch will continue to serve the Board in an unofficial capacity as an advisor.

For the benefit of Ms. Silva and other members, Ms. Louis gave an overview of the Board's recent efforts. Although established in the 1970s, the Board became particularly active when the United States Geological Survey (USGS) was preparing a series update of Hawaiian Island quad maps in the 1990s. About that time, the National Parks Service (NPS) raised the issue of using diacritical marks for Hawaiian place names in its Hawai'i parks. The Board had not addressed the issue of using kahakō or 'okina earlier because the technology was not available to apply diacritical marks, particularly the kahakō, to names routinely. The BGN asked if the HBGN would be willing to take on the task of recommending which Hawai'i place should have which diacritical marks. Everett Wingert (Professor, Geography Department, University of Hawai'i) and Craig Tasaka (former Manager of the Hawaii GIS Program) spearheaded this effort by creating a database of all place names appearing on the Hawai'i USGS Quads. Ms. Louis compiled this database and the Board would then go through it systematically and recommend which place names should be corrected by adding appropriate diacritical marks. This action is considered a name spelling, not a name change. It took eight to nine years to complete all the Quads.

The Board followed certain conventions developed by a Board subcommittee when determining place name corrections. Conventions developed by 'Ahahui 'Ōlelo Hawai'i in 1978 are generally followed and Mary Kawena Pukui's *Place Names of Hawaii* is considered the lead authority or primary source for determining the appropriate use of kahakō or 'okina in particular place names. Information from secondary sources is recorded on the spreadsheets as a basis for further research because their sources and research methods are unknown. The pronunciation of a place name by a respected elder with ties to a place name's location will trump what is in *Place Names of Hawaii*. The elder then becomes the lead

authority for that name or names. Diacritical marks are not added if there is no source supporting a correction.

The Board is currently reviewing place names that are listed in the GNIS (pronounced jee-nis) but were not found on the USGS Quads when the Hawaii place names database was being compiled. This includes close to 1,000 names. The Board is about to finish going through the Hawai'i Island names on this list and will work on the Maui list next. The GNIS database was initially created under contract to a university on the mainland which went through all the USGS Quads and entered all place names found on the Quads into a single database. In the second round, the same university requested that all state and county agencies submit all place name data they had and these data were then entered in the GNIS. The HBGN was asked to go through the GNIS and correct the Hawai'i names by adding, where appropriate, diacritical marks to existing letters. These are place name corrections, not name changes. There is a separate process for changing a name in the database which requires completing a form. Removing a letter or changing the order of any letter in a name is considered a name change. Sometimes discrepancies are also found between what is on the map and what is in the database. These are noted in the HBGN spreadsheets. The BGN recognizes the HBGN's expertise and usually accepts the HBGN's recommended corrections for Hawaiian names. Some states maintain their own place name databases that are not always consistent with the GNIS.

In reviewing the updated spreadsheet, Mr. Buto noted that a particular place name, Kalalau, was still on the Board's spreadsheet although his notes indicate that the Board decided that it should be Kalalua instead of Kalalau. This issue was initially raised when staff at the BGN sent an email seeking clarification on the Board's recommendation regarding Kalalua, a place in Puna, Hawai'i Island. At the Board's November 21, 2012 meeting, the Board agreed that Kalalua was correct and Kalalau was likely a transposition of the last two letters. Kalalua appears in *Place Names of Hawaii* as the name of crater on Kilauea's east rift zone and would make sense given that "lua" was often applied to volcanic craters. The Board thus recommended that BGN maintain the spelling Kalalua. Ms. Louis corrected the appropriate spreadsheets to be consistent with the Board's November 21, 2012 decision.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Decision on Proposal to Change Name of "Seven Pools" (BGN 1971, GNIS ID: 15006250) to "Pools of 'Ohe'o" in Haleakala National Park

Ms. Lane-Kamahele confirmed, on behalf of NPS, that NPS still supports changing the name of "Seven Pools", often called "Seven Sacred Pools", as has been discussed intermittently since 1971. Ms. Silva asked what the source was of the name 'Ohe'o and that particular spelling. Ms. Losch noted that the 'Ohe'o is in *Place Names of Hawaii*, but asked if the name could be just 'Ohe'o without the "Pools of" which she believes would be more appropriate. This possible recommendation was discussed at the previous meeting. Ms. Louis noted that 'Ohe'o already appears on the U.S.G.S. Quads and is in the GNIS as 'Ohe'o Gulch. In searching for entries of 'Ohe'o in the GNIS, Ms. Louis noticed, however, that 'Ohe'o Gulch was inadvertently changed to 'Ohe'o without "Gulch" when the HBGN submitted its name corrections for that area. The BGN apparently accepted this change without question.

Ms. Louis explained that if the HBGN recommends that “Seven Pools” be changed to just ‘Ohe’o, it would be proposing a new name and that name would be assigned a new GNIS identification number. The name “Seven Pools” would remain in the GNIS but it would become a historic name. If the HBGN proposes changing “Seven Pools” to “Pools of ‘Ohe’o”, then it would be a name change because the recommended name is being applied to the same feature type as the current name and would have the same identification number. The BGN generally requires that official place names include specific and generic names, the generic name being a feature type and the specific name being the given name. Including feature types allows given names to be associated with specific points on a map. This approach is not always consistent with how native Hawaiians viewed landscapes and named places.

Motion: To Recommend to the BGN that a New Name, ‘Ohe’o, be Applied to the Currently Named “Seven Pools” (BGN 1971, GNIS ID: 15006250) in Haleakalā National Park, Island of Maui.

Vote: Approved Unanimously. Ayes: Buto, Kam, McEldowney Morales, and Silva.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Discussion of Remaining Hawai’i Island Names

The Board reviewed a total of six names on the spreadsheet listing names that are in the GNIS but were not found on the USGS Quads when the spreadsheets were first compiled. Of these, three were determined to need further research (Waiahuli, Waiakeawaena Elementary School, and Waikoloaiki), two were corrected based on *Place Names of Hawaii* (Wai’ahukini and Wai’ākōlea Pond), and three determinations were HBGN decisions based on secondary sources and on what makes sense in the Hawaiian language (Wai’ōpae Tidepools Marine Life Conservation District, Waiemi Falls, and Waikamakapō).

Further research on Waiakeawaena Elementary School and Waikoloaiki will focus on determining if components of the names should be combined or separated (i.e., Waiākea and waena; Waikoloa and iki) based on known usage. If the name is combined, then users of the name view waena or iki as being part of the name. If the name is not combined, then waena or iki were added to indicate where something is in the larger area of Waiākea or Waikoloa.

AGENDA ITEM 4: Old and New Business

Ms. Louis reported that she will be having a Skype meeting with the people who run the “Landsongs” website. The website was established to help native peoples use current technology to preserve and perpetuate traditional knowledge of their ancestral landscapes, including their histories and place names. It will be an exchange of experiences, ideas, and possibilities. Ms. Louis will discuss the “Native Place Names of Hawai’i” project undertaken on behalf of the HBGN. The project entailed creating and hosting a website that allows users to find the location of Hawaiian place names, see the name with diacritical marks (if any), to hear the name pronounced, and read an explanation on what is known about the name. It was based on the Coeur d’Alene Native Names Project. The Hawai’i project had hoped to include videos of the places and interviews with people discussing those places. The “Native Place Names of Hawai’i” project was funded by a grant from the USGS in 2008. With the grant, the website was established and the island of Kaho’olawe completed. Ms. Losch

provided the voice for the recorded pronunciations. The only complication she found was names with the letter "w". She did not know if the "w" should be said with "v" sound or "w" sound, so she pronounced the name with both. Mr. Buto supports continuing the project and keeping it from dying but no resources are currently available to expand the effort and grant applications were not funded. Ms. Louis and Mr. Buto are hoping to identify other ways to perpetuate the project.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Adjourn

Before adjourning, the Board set March 21, 2013 as the date for the next meeting.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly McEldowney