

## ATTACHMENT

### Colorado New Geographic Name Policy

**BACKGROUND.** Historically, features were named because there was a need to refer to the feature for navigation or other reference purposes, and applying a name to a feature was more concise than describing the feature in other ways, such as its latitude/longitude or other descriptive means. Lately there has been considerable interest in using natural features to memorialize a name, and names are being applied to features not because the feature needs a name but because the name needs a feature. A common example of this practice has been commemorative names, in which the name of a person is applied to a feature.

The US Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) has standards for the recognition of names commemorating a specific person that have been used successfully for some time. They require a definite association between the person to be commemorated and the feature that will carry the name. For persons of national or international fame, there need not necessarily be an association between the person and the feature, but most commemorative names are for locally known persons whose names are applied to locally known features.

Beyond commemorating noteworthy persons, there have recently been a number of proposals to commemorate wholesome and worthwhile concepts, ideals, organizations, events, etc. Local public approval of these name applications is almost automatic, but it is probable that the public is merely acknowledging the worthiness of the subject of the name, with far less thought given to its appropriateness as a geographic name. Opposing these geographic name applications can be politically uncomfortable, as it can be construed as opposing the subject matter.

Furthermore, the mountains of Colorado, many which remain unnamed, are a magnet for new name proposals. People with an admirable name in search of a feature to carry the name find Colorado to be a bountiful source of suitable (to them) features.

The Colorado Board on Geographic Names believes that it should be conservative in approving new names for unnamed features or changing the name of an existing feature. It believes there should be good reason to name or rename such features beyond the fact that the subject of a name is admirable. Given that the proposals described above usually do not have a direct association with the feature to be named/renamed, it would be helpful to establish other criteria for judging the suitability of these proposals so that simply proposing such a name does not guarantee approval. This policy addresses that issue. It does not apply to proposals to recognize feature names that are in public use but which have not yet been recognized as official by the USBGN.

**POLICY:** NAME PROPOSALS COMMEMORATING CONCEPTS, IDEALS, ORGANIZATIONS, GROUPS, EVENTS, ETC., AND NATIONALLY FAMOUS PERSONS.

The Colorado Board on Geographic Names will approve a proposal to name an unnamed feature for, or to change the name of a feature to, concepts, ideals, and other intangibles, and

events, organizations and persons that have broad public appeal or fame outside the state of Colorado only if the proponent demonstrates either (1) a direct association between the name and the feature, or (2) approval of the name application by the general public both within and outside the state of Colorado. Proponents are encouraged to also demonstrate that naming a geographic feature is the most suitable way to commemorate the subject and that the subject has not already been suitably commemorated by other means, such as monuments, named institutions, etc.

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