

Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board

Department of Environment and Conservation
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

2010-11 Annual Activity Report



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1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

The Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board (NLGNB) was inactive in the fiscal year 2010-11 as the previous board had expired on December 31, 2009, consequentially no board meetings were held; however, a new NLGNB has been appointed, effective June 28, 2011. In the meantime, it is thought appropriate to comment on activities carried out on behalf of the NLGNB by the Administrative Officer/ Secretary in consultation with the former Chair and vice-Chair, and the Director of Surveys and Mapping, Lands Branch, Department of Environment and Conservation. Some of these activities relate to follow up and ongoing items of former NLGNB business; others involve data management and the planning and the preparation of material for future consideration of the NLGNB in accordance with the 2011-14 NLGNB Activity Plan.

Two items of ongoing business were the ministerial endorsement of 161 geographical name decisions recommended by the NLGNB prior to December 31, 2009, and four (4) place name changes in the proposed Innu Land Claim area of Labrador agreed to by both the Innu Nation and the NLGNB. These decisions became official May 5th, 2010.

The NLGNB encourages the collection and submission of new names, and the recommendation of needed changes to existing toponymy (place-names) on a voluntary basis by individuals, groups and other institutions with an interest in the naming process. These voluntary activities are guided and supervised by the Administrative Officer/Secretary to insure that data from these sources meet the NLGNB's established principles and guidelines. This year a new dialogue on official place-name usage and toponymic data bases was held with the NL Heritage website Unit, Maritime History Archives, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

As mentioned above, a new NLGNB was appointed June 28th, 2011, so that the toponymic data base of our Province can continue to be expanded and improved. We also have much work to do in advancing the commemorative naming program begun under the last NLGNB and in undertaking other initiatives, such as the proposed high school project, aimed at making our program more relevant in preserving our cultural heritage and promoting our social and cultural well-being. The NLGNB can anticipate much more involvement and participation in Aboriginal toponymy involving both the Innu Nation and the Inuit of Labrador, and possibly in future other Aboriginal/First Nations groups.

I feel obligated to draw attention to and express my gratitude to our Administrative Officer/ Secretary, Mr. Randy Hawkins, for his indefatigable dedication and personal commitment to the work of the NLGNB. Even in its absence during the fiscal year 2010-11, and largely through his efforts, the work of the NLGNB was advanced progressively and very well indeed.

As Chair, I can attest that the NLGNB 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 Board Act* (CHAPTER G-3; 1991 c29 s2).

The Act empowers the NLGNB 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* 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 exception of the Chair, 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 NLGNB.

The NLGNB term had expired for the duration of the 2010-11 fiscal year pending reappointment in the summer of 2011. No meetings were held.

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.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Processed naming recommendations from the general public and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopted 1424 names of places and geographical features. These names resulted from three NLGNB meeting recommendations dating from the fiscal years of 2007-11.

3. SHARED COMMITMENTS

As previously indicated, the success of the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Program in 2010-11 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.
- The provincial Department of Education, in respect to the development of a proposal to integrate the study of toponymy into the existing high school curriculum.
- 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 Municipal Affairs, in respect to names of incorporated towns and local service districts.
- The provincial Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, in respect to names of geographical features in the Land Claim areas.
- NL Heritage website Unit, Maritime History Archives, Memorial University of Newfoundland on official place-name usage in published articles.

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 received ministerial approval on May 5th, 2010. This decision list included (4) name changes involving aboriginal place names within the proposed Innu Land Claim area of Labrador. The adoption of these names is the result of a collaborative effort between the NLGNB and the Innu Nation of Labrador.

Another significant achievement of the 2010-11 fiscal year was the development of a draft pilot project proposal to engage students in the toponymy process of Newfoundland and Labrador. This proposal seeks the involvement of student participants who are enrolled in the course NL Studies 2205. Selected students involved in the pilot project can/will play an active role in the toponymy collection process for many years to come. With the collaboration of the department of Education, this proposal would involve selected high school students in the collection of geographical features and places within their very own local communities. This proposal is subject to approval and adoption by the Department of Education.

5. OUTCOMES

The NLGNB will be reporting on the same objectives and indicators each year as indicated in the 2008-11 Activity Plan. Where an indicator has not been fully met, an explanation is provided.

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, the NLGNB have been successful in achieving results on the planned activities through the work performed by its Administrative Officer. As previously noted, the NLGNB was inactive during 2010-11.

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, 2011, 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"> 1,009 new provincial records were uploaded to the federal dataset in the 2010-11 fiscal year. These geographical naming proposals will be discussed at future meetings of the NLGNB in the next year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisions made to current names in dataset. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 953 existing database records were edited and uploaded to the federal dataset in the 2010-11 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"> Approximately 300 feature coordinate adjustments were made in the 2010-11 report period.

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 needs to have their extent captured digitally. These standards are developed on a national level and the work will require several years to complete.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2011, the NLGNB will have implemented a digital delineation process in accordance with nationally recognized guidelines. Work was not completed on this strategy during 2010-11, given that the NLGNB was inactive.

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"> A website was developed for displaying the physical extents or geometries of official geographical names in Canada. This website enables members of the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC) to verify the geometries of official toponyms (places names) within Canada. No progress was made on feature delineation because the required National Standard had not been finalized. A national standard was developed in the spring of 2011. Digital delineation will commence in the summer of 2011.

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, 2011, the NLGNB will work on a strategy for a provincial Commemorative Naming Program. Work was not completed on this strategy during 2010-11, given that the NLGNB was inactive.

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"> The NLGNB term had expired for the 2010-11 report period.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Names proposed to provincial and federal jurisdictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NLGNB term had expired for the 2010-11 report period.

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, 2011, the NLGNB will have increased the visibility and profile of the NLGNB. Work was not completed on this strategy during 2010-11, given that the NLGNB was inactive.

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. • Google Earth (kml links) were added to the departmental website. • Additional updates and links will be added in the next fiscal year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacts made with new participants in the interior of Labrador and other areas in the Province. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NLGNB term had expired for the 2010-11 report period. • Names surveys dating back to the mid 1980's were reviewed. Any resulting proposals will be discussed at future NLGNB meetings in the next fiscal year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of speaking engagements on the NLGNB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NLGNB term had expired for the 2010-11 report period.
<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:

During 2010-11, Randy Hawkins, the Administrative Officer/ Secretary, was able to significantly improve the integrity and management of our geographical names by creating 1,009 new database records and editing 953 existing ones. In addition, he prepared a list of 1,405 geographical names for future NLGNB agendas. Most of these represent names from field surveys conducted by geography students at Memorial University in Trinity Bay and South-eastern Labrador in the 1980s but which, in the absence of a NLGNB for nearly a 10 year period shortly thereafter, were never presented for examination and formally adopted. In response to requests to the NLGNB from members of the public the origins and meanings of specific place-names were researched and replied to, among them this year were: *Duntara*, *Loch Lomond*, and *Saltons*. Work on the correction of coordinate point locations of offshore underwater features was continued in partnership with Mr. Gary Smith, Sailings Directions Manager, Canadian Hydrographic Service, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Vice-Chair of the NLGNB.

In the 2010-11 fiscal year, the NLGNB did not hold regular meetings, however 161 geographical features were recommended for Ministerial adoption. These recommendations arose from three NLGNB meetings from the 2009-10 fiscal year. However these names were not officially adopted until the 2010-11 report period.

During the 2010-11 fiscal year, the following new names and name changes were adopted under the authority of the *Municipalities Act, 1999*:

- Town of Fogo changed to Town of Fogo Island
- Three former towns became neighbourhoods of Town of Fogo Island
- Joe Batt's Arm-Barred Islands-Shoal Bay (neighbourhood)
- Seldom-Little Seldom (neighbourhood)
- Tilting (neighbourhood)
- Fogo Island Region rescinded
- Lethbridge, Morley's Siding, Brooklyn, Charleston, Jamestown, Portland, Winter Brook and Sweet Bay became Local Service District (new)
- Grand Bruit changed from a Local Service District to a Vacated or seasonal settlement
- Little Catalina changed from former town to neighbourhood of Trinity Bay North (annexation)

6b. General Inquiry Statistics:

The following statistics are estimated:

2010-11 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	171
Historical origin inquiries resolved by Dr. Gordon Handcock	65

7. FISCAL STATEMENTS

Statement of Expenditures		
NLGNB Expenditures	Total 2010-11 Expenditures	Projected 2011-12 Expenditures
Professional Services (Chair)	\$0.00	\$5,500.00
Travel Expenses	N/A	\$4,500.00
Meeting Accommodations	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Totals	\$0.00	\$11,000.00
The above stated Expenditures and Projection are certified correct.		