

**Newfoundland and Labrador  
Geographical Names Board  
2015-16 Annual Activity Report**



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

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I am pleased to report that the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board (NLGNB) made good progress in the fiscal year 2015-16.

A major highlight was the appointment of a new board in October 2015, for a three year term commencing on January 1, 2016. It was encouraging that four dedicated colleagues (including our secretary, Randy Hawkins) from the last NLGNB were reappointed and that Edward Tuttauk a new member from Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador was added. We now have two members from Labrador.

Under the provisions of the *Geographical Names Board Act*, the board is commissioned as an advisory body to make recommendations on names of geographical features and places in the province to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Administratively, the NLGNB falls under the supervision of the director responsible for surveys and mapping of the Lands Branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs. The NLGNB has no statutory authority to collect revenue, nor is there a requirement to submit financial statements.

During a two-day meeting March 23 and 24, 2016 approximately 100 new names were recommended for ministerial review and endorsement. The proposals included Aboriginal names, names from field surveys by Memorial University geography students in the 1980s and 90s, and recent names submitted by public officials and private citizens. Significant advances were made in reviewing and recommending geographical names in more remote and natural resource areas, particularly in identifying suitable official locally-used names for forest access roads. The latter are intended to facilitate and enhance economic and cultural development, safe travelling, and especially search and rescue.

The NLGNB also advanced plans for a commemorative naming project related to the participation of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in World War I. At our invitation Lt.-Col. (Ret'd) Norman Bull and Chair Frank Gogos, two members of the Advisory Committee of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Museum met with the board on March 24, 2016 to discuss World War I commemorative naming strategies, options and opportunities. They both agreed to further consultations and also volunteered to submit annotated lists of outstanding persons, notable events and important locations which they considered worthy and most appropriate to commemorate.

The NLGNB, mainly through our secretary, conducted very productive consultations and liaisons with members of the general public, academics, writers, researchers, municipalities, government departments and agencies, as well as Aboriginal governments and organizations having a vested interest in geographical names.

As chair, I would like to express my gratitude to my NLGNB colleagues who have volunteered to contribute their knowledge, skills and experience over the next three years toward adding to and improving our toponymic database. I thank our secretary Randy Hawkins for his tireless efforts and devotion to the work of the board. I also gratefully acknowledge the management and staff of the Lands Branch for their valued interest, support, and technical advice, especially to thank Jeff Wood for sound guidance in all that we do.

As chair of the NLGNB, I can attest that this report has been prepared in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act* requirements for a category three entity and my signature below is confirmation that the NLGNB accepts accountability for the results reported in this document.



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W.G. Handcock  
Professor Emeritus in Geography  
Chair

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## 1.0 BOARD OVERVIEW

The NLGNB is the main authority for recommending to government, through the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the proper status of and all changes related to names of places and geographical features in the province.

The NLGNB consists of the provincial secretary, a permanent staff member with the title Administrative Officer I assigned by the department, and five other members appointed by the minister. Members are appointed for a term of three years. The NLGNB operates under the departmental budget. The current NLGNB was appointed on October 19<sup>th</sup> effective immediately for a three year term that commenced January 1, 2016.

### 1.1 Mandate and Lines of Business

The main responsibility of the NLGNB is to administer the *Geographical Names Board Act*. The Act empowers the NLGNB with the following duties:

- gather, collate and record information respecting names of places and geographical features in the province;
- consult with and advise government departments and agencies, municipalities, Aboriginal governments and organizations and other bodies or persons concerned with the selection of place names or the renaming of places and features regarding the suitability and spelling of the names;
- consider and make recommendations respecting a proposed change in the name of a place or geographical feature already in use that may be considered or be represented to be inappropriate to the place or geographical feature to which it is applied;
- collaborate with the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (now known as the Geographical Names Board of Canada) respecting the selection of new geographical names, the elimination of alternative or duplicated names, the correct or preferred spelling of established names and other matters that may be of concern to the NLGNB or the Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names;
- hold public meetings or invite submissions to NLGNB meetings where dispute arises or may arise with respect to the naming or renaming of a place or geographical feature; and
- recommend to the minister for approval the names of places or geographical features.

Section 9 of the *Act* states “Notwithstanding sections 5 to 8, this Act shall be read and applied in conjunction with the *Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement Act* and, where a provision of this 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 *Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement Act* shall have precedence over the provision of this Act.”

## 1.2 Representation

All meetings are held in St. John’s. The table below lists the two women and four men that constitute the members of the NLGNB as of March 31, 2016.

Name	Role	Residence
Dr. Gordon Handcock	Chair	Salvage & Mount Pearl
Mr. Gary N. Smith	Vice-Chair	Bishop’s Cove, C.B.
Mr. Randy Hawkins	Secretary	St. John’s
Mr. Edward Tuttauq	Member	Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Ms. Franca Smith	Member	Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Ms. Cheryl Brown-McLean	Member	St. John’s

## 1.3 Vision

The vision of the NLGNB is to record and preserve 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.

## 1.4 Mission

By March 31, 2017, the NLGNB will have made recommendations to government in relation to any new geographical features and place names.

## 1.5 Expenditures

NLGNB Expenditures	Total 2015-16 Expenditures
Professional Services (Chair)	\$1005.00
Travel Expenses	\$0.00
Meeting Expenses	\$129.08
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,134.08</b>

Funding to support the work of the NLGNB was provided to the entity by the Survey and Mapping Division of the Department of Municipal Affairs.

## 2.0 SHARED COMMITMENTS

As noted, the success of the NLGNB program in 2015-16 stemmed largely from cooperative working partnerships between the NLGNB and different provincial and federal government agencies as well as Aboriginal governments and organizations. The partners most engaged this year included:

- The Earth Sciences Sector of Natural Resources Canada and the Geographical Names Board of Canada Secretariat in providing direct access to the federal database;
- The Department of Fisheries and Oceans in dealing with names of coastal and underwater features and fishing grounds;
- The Forestry and Agrifoods Agency relating to names of forest access roads and other geographical features;
- The Innu Nation regarding geographical place names in Innu Land Claim areas of Labrador;
- The Nunatsiavut Government for names within Labrador Inuit Lands (LIL) and the Labrador Inuit Settlement Area (LISA) outside LIL;
- Parks Canada concerning names within L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site and Terra Nova National Park;
- The Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development on names selected for Scenic Tourist Routes; and,
- The Advisory Committee of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Museum on the subject of geographical names and commemoration of the participation of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in World War I.

Additionally, the success of the NLGNB's program in 2015-16 was due to the cooperation and active participation of citizens of the province.

## 3.0 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- One NLGNB meeting was held in the 2015-16 reporting period. The NLGNB recommended 100 names for ministerial review and endorsement.
- The NLGNB communicated with the Nunatsiavut Government concerning Innu Nation geographical place-name proposals inside the Nunatsiavut Government lands.

## 4.0 REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

### Issue 1: Data Integrity and Management

With the advent of improved mapping and computer technologies, standards for toponymic (place-name) data management are continually changing. The NLGNB strives to keep pace with and contribute to national standards to ensure that these measures will enhance our toponymic program and contribute to the preservation of our cultural heritage.

All geographical names are obtained on a voluntary basis. The data collection process is reactive to the names obtained in the report period. The total number of names processed in this report period may include names that have been collected over previous years.

**Objective 1:** By March 31, 2016 the NLGNB will have maintained the provincial geographical names dataset to ensure that it meets with existing Canadian national standards.

**Performance Measure:** Maintained provincial geographical names dataset.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
Collected and entered geographical names in the dataset.	71 new geographical names were entered in the dataset during the report period.
Made revisions to current names in the dataset.	295 geographical name records were modified in the dataset in 2015-16
Ensured that data integrity was in accordance with provincial guidelines and principles.	A category termed “scenic touring routes” was added to our provincial toponymic system to classify thematic names of regional roads such as The Irish Loop, The Viking Trail and Heritage Run. These routes, of which there are 13, were originally defined and named by the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development to identify and draw attention to natural attractions, cultural activities and accommodations to promote tourism. Though used for several decades and published on provincial road maps, these names were not brought to the NLGNB for approval officially until fiscal year 2015-16.

**Discussion of Results:** All geographical names approved by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are added to and maintained in the federal database. As such the federal and provincial datasets for Newfoundland and Labrador are the same. Likewise, the provincial and federal database maintenance structures are also identical. During the report period, the federal database was restructured resulting in approximately three months of operating downtime and a decline in the processing of name decisions.

## Issue 2: Natural Wilderness Areas and Lands of Aboriginal Occupancy

A priority in 2015-16 was the recording and processing (and hence preservation) of the well-established, locally-used names of geographical features in remote and natural wilderness areas. All names, collected and recommended, including traditional Aboriginal names were provided by elders and/or knowledgeable long-standing residents.

**Objective 2:** By March 31, 2016 the NLGNB collected and processed traditional Aboriginal geographic names.

**Performance Measure:** Implementation of Aboriginal names collection process.

Indicators	Accomplishments
Communicated with persons with good knowledge of remote and natural wilderness areas and Aboriginal groups.	<p>In the reporting period both the Nunatsiavut Government and the Innu Nation were consulted prior to the recommendation of three Aboriginal names:</p> <p>Inside the proposed Innu land claim area;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tshiashku-minishtik<sup>U</sup> is a name change for the current Tshiashku-minishtiku.</li> </ul> <p>Inside the Nunatsiavut Government LISA;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voisey's Bay is a name change for the current Voisey Bay.</li> <li>▪ Shapeiau is a name change for the current Shapio Lake.</li> </ul> <p>Aboriginal name changes are pending ministerial approval.</p>
Collected and recorded Aboriginal names and geographical names from remote and wilderness areas.	Place name submission is at the discretion of Aboriginal groups. No new Aboriginal names were collected in this reporting period which is not surprising given that fiscal 2014-15 was a record year for the highest number of Aboriginal place names in remote and wilderness areas of Labrador.
Reported on issues/challenges with the collection and processing of Aboriginal names and new names from remote and wilderness areas.	<p>Correspondence from the Nunatsiavut Government on the Innu Nation geographical name proposals located inside Labrador Inuit Lands (LIL) and the Labrador Inuit Settlement Areas (LISA), submitted on November 17, 2015, stated their opposition to any of these inside LIL.</p> <p>The Nunatsiavut Government further indicated that it had initiated its own place-name collection, a process which could take several years to complete. In that the Nunatsiavut Government has statutory authority on place-naming inside LIL, the Innu Nation proposals inside this administrative area must be deferred indefinitely.</p> <p>However, the Nunatsiavut Government concurred with select name change proposals inside Nunatsiavut Government LISA.</p> <p>The Nunatsiavut Government did not appear to favour the dual naming policy previously suggested along with the Innu Nation proposals.</p> <p>The Nunatsiavut Government agreed to change the spelling of names of features inside LISA that had been written incorrectly.</p>

**Discussion of Results:** The implementation of Aboriginal place names in Newfoundland and Labrador has continued to make significant progress in 2015-16. Significant progress was made in 2015-16 in improving Aboriginal toponymy (place-names) and particularly in engaging Aboriginal groups directly in the process. The Nunatsiavut Government have established their own place-name collecting and processing program which will in turn greatly complement and facilitate the work of the NLGNB.

### Issue 3: Public Outreach and Awareness

The geographical names program contributes to preserving the cultural heritage of all citizens throughout the province. The NLGNB continues to actively seek engagement of interest groups in the program and the naming process.

**Objective 3:** By March 31, 2016 the NLGNB engaged the public in the geographical naming process.

**Performance Measure:** Work progressed on development of strategies.

Indicators	Accomplishments
Contacted municipalities.	The Towns of Codroy and Eastport were contacted to verify local usage for place-name proposals in their respective jurisdictions. Additional submissions from these municipalities are anticipated.
Contacted researchers and special interest groups.	<p>During the past year the NLGNB provided topographic maps to special interest groups and individuals such as trappers, conservation officers, forestry officials, and outfitters to collect and record new feature names.</p> <p>The NLGNB consulted with researchers with the Advisory Committee of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Museum on the Commemoration of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians participation in World War I.</p> <p>Potential commemorative candidates have been identified throughout the province. The NLGNB is currently working on a short list of commemorative naming proposals.</p> <p>A list of members recently provided by the provincial Harbour Authorities contains 1,390 names throughout the province. This list will be used to provide local contacts in the coming year.</p>
Contacted members of the general public.	<p>11 naming proposals received from the general public and were recommended for endorsement.</p> <p>Contacts this year included residents of Flat Bay, Highlands, Stephenville, Port au Port, Howley, Kippens, Lourdes, Tickle Cove, Bonavista and Clarenville.</p>
Collaborated with other provincial/federal government agencies.	<p>Collaborated with the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency with respect to the collection of 43 geographical names which were recommended for endorsement.</p> <p>Collaborated with Parks Canada, with respect to 30 geographical place names within L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site and Terra Nova National Park. These proposals consisted of 17 new names and 13 name changes and were</p>

	<p>based on information initially collected from local residents. These names are being prepared for ministerial review and endorsement.</p> <p>Collaborated with the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development with respect to the geographical naming of 13 well-known scenic touring routes. These names are being prepared for ministerial review and endorsement. These recommendations are pending approval.</p>
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**Discussion of Results:** Public engagement is important to the operation and success of the geographical names program in the province. The NLGNB takes and welcomes every opportunity to encourage residents to become actively involved in the process.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board reports on the same objectives, measures and indicators for all three years of its 2014-17 Activity Plan.

## 5.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- The NLGNB has initiated a strategy to commemorate our participation in World War I. This presents an opportunity to commemorate local people. A list of veterans covering all areas of Newfoundland and Labrador has been submitted by the Advisory Committee of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Museum for possible name commemoration of geographic features. Time has proven a challenge in this effort as it may not been possible to gain approval from the Nunatsiavut government in time to have a Labrador participant commemorated for Remembrance Day.
- The NLGNB has discussed and will continue to explore with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, school boards and teachers, about the possibility of including place-name studies as a unit in the high school cultural course, Newfoundland Studies 2205, beginning first with a pilot project in a selected school. The NLGNB considers this to be an excellent opportunity to engage the public more meaningfully in the geographical names program.