

# Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board

Department of Environment and Conservation  
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

2013-14 Annual Activity Report



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## 1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Much progress was made this fiscal year in adding to the official toponymic database of this province. Three (3), two-day meetings were held: May 30-31, 2013; September 5-6, 2013; and November 28-29, 2013, during which 825 new names were reviewed and recommended for ministerial approval. These recommendations were adopted on February 13, 2014 and published in the Newfoundland and Labrador Gazette on February 28, 2014. Compared to former years, and the numbers of new names approved by other naming authorities in Canada last year, these numbers represent outstanding achievement and efficiency. In the last two years, for example, the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board (NLGNB) has each year more than doubled its normal annual output and last year alone this province approved more than half of 1600 new names of all naming jurisdictions across the nation.

The NLGNB's strategy in the collection and submission of new names, and making needed changes to existing toponymy (the study of place-naming) by seeking individuals, groups and other institutions of the general public with local knowledge and an interest in the naming process continued to be productive. These activities were primarily supervised by the Secretary to ensure that data submitted meet the established NLGNB principles and guidelines before being brought forward for review. This year members of the NLGNB also participated in contacting knowledgeable contributors and acting as liaisons in field work. Through this process of voluntary submissions, the NLGNB is gradually identifying feature names for geographical features that were previously unnamed. Locally-used toponyms in areas where there was no systematic field work and also reviewing areas where corrections or modifications are requested by residents. This year voluntary contributors submitted names in most parts of the province but the principal regions were Central Newfoundland, the South Coast, the West Coast, the Great Northern Peninsula and Southern Labrador.

The more significant contributors for 2013-14 were; Mr. Brian Harris, a retired woodsman and farmer, of Buchans; Mr. Gregory Jeddore, Forestry Manager of the Samiajij Miawpukek First Nation of Conne River; Mr. Doug Sanger and Mr. Silas Thompson, retired cabin owners, Grand Falls; Mr. Abel and John Taylor of Raleigh; Mr. Melvin Simmonds, retired tradesman and Mr. Don Chatman, retired woodsman and saw-miller, of Cannings Cove; Mr. Edward Humby, fisherman, of Melrose; Mr. Melvin White, Member, Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, Bay St. George; Mr. Lloyd Pardy, retired coast guard officer Happy Valley-Goose Bay and former resident of Cartwright; and Mr. Keith Garland of Pouch Cove. Last year the NLGNB made further progress in Aboriginal naming activities, partnerships and outreach. The NLGNB plans to focus more on Aboriginal names this year especially with respect to the Innu and Inuit in Labrador.

During the year, new initiatives were taken to review the locally-used names of resource access and tourist development roads in inland areas through regional forest units of the Department of Natural Resources. Most of these roads are outside municipalities. Under current legislation, the NLGNB is the only body mandated to recommend these names for official use. Contacts were made with forestry units in Gambo, Clarenville and Corner Brook who all indicated they were collecting road names and having them sign-posted. Road names are important for citizens to relate to the environment of the areas the roads traverse and connect to the provincial highway system. Proper authoritative names are especially important for the safety of cabin owners, recreational users and travellers, search and rescue activities, firefighting and woods operations. Authoritative road names are also essential for use in legal documents such as contracts for road and bridge construction and maintenance, property ownership and leases, and insurance policies.

The NLGNB hosted a visit from Mr. Dan Myles. Supervisor, Forestry Engineering, Corner Brook, Department of Natural Resources, to discuss proper procedures in naming the forest access roads throughout the province. He agreed with the necessity of having the names officialised and promised full

cooperation from his department in carrying out the process. As a beginning he supplied the names of all the regional directors of forestry units as contacts for us. Road naming promises to be a very important focus for the NLGNB over the next few years.

Although the NLGNB has developed a policy on commemorative names, for the present the NLGNB have other priorities including advancing toponymic coverage of the province, and encouraging Aboriginal naming. Last year commemorative names were dealt with accordingly as they were submitted by individuals but no steps were taken to promote or encourage the type of naming undertaken in provinces such as Manitoba and Saskatchewan which have formal programs to commemorate casualties of World War I by putting their names on features which have no official locally-used names.

Despite not making as much progress as one would wish in promoting the study of toponomy as a theme or topic in social studies in the provincial school system or raising awareness among the general public on the work of the NLGNB and how citizens can participate, I am extremely proud of the overall progress that was achieved and particularly the productivity in approving new names.

The NLGNB appreciates the attention, interest, support and council of Mr. Peter Howe, ADM of Lands, Department of Environment and Conservation, Mr. Darren Moore, acting Director of the Surveys and Mapping Division (the unit responsible for administration of the NLGNB), and especially the technical advice and guidance to the Secretary given by Mr. Jeff Wood, Manager of Geomatics Support Services, Surveys and Mapping Division, in preparing and presenting names at NLGNB meetings. The revised method of handling names in large measure accounts for greater efficiency and engagement of NLGNB members in decision-making and has led to greater productivity in recommendations.

Again, I commend the hard work and devotion of the NLGNB's Secretary, Mr. Randy Hawkins. The NLGNB is extremely well served by his meticulous preparations for meetings and the carrying out of other duties. Members find and enjoy great collegiality in working with him as well as a strong sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. The NLGNB and the province are very fortunate to have in Randy an outstanding toponymist and a devoted public servant. Mr. Hawkins has become exceptionally skilled in processing names submissions and managing toponymic databases. Additionally he has excellent abilities in establishing goodwill liaisons and cooperation with other departments and members of the public in handling toponymic requests. Largely through his efforts, the work of the NLGNB was again remarkably successful this fiscal year.

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



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**W.G. Handcock**  
**Professor Emeritus in Geography**  
**Chair**

## 2. BOARD OVERVIEW

### 2a. Mandate

The 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*.

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 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.”

### 2b. Representation

All meetings are held in St. John’s. The table below lists all members of the NLGNB.

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
Ms. Margarita Andersen (Rita)	Member	Nain
Ms. Franca Smith	Member	Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Ms. Cheryl Brown-McLean	Member	St. John’s

## 2c. Vision

The vision of the NLGNB is to record and preserve geographical names for functional use and as an important part of the province's 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 March 31, 2017, the NLGNB will have made recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in relation to any new geographical names.

Performance Measure: Made recommendations to Government.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Processed naming recommendations from the general public and other stakeholders.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The NLGNB reviewed and recommended for Ministerial approval a total of 3,223 new names and/or name changes. This total represents recommendations made throughout the planning cycle and therefore represents progress towards the mission.</li></ul>

## 3. SHARED COMMITMENTS

As previously indicated, the success of the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Program in 2013-14 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 Sciences Sector of Natural Resources Canada and the GNBC Secretariat, in providing direct access to the federal database.
- The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, with respect to names of coastal and underwater features and fishing grounds around Newfoundland and Labrador.
- The Miawpukek First Nation of Samiajjj Miawpukek (Conne River) with respect to names in that area of the province.
- The Innu Nation with respect to geographical place names in the proposed Innu Land Claim areas of Labrador.

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

## 4. HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Three (3) NLGNB meetings were held in the 2013-14 report period. A total of 825 geographical names were recommended. These names were adopted on February 13, 2014.

The NLGNB also responded to inquiries and requests for geographical name information from the general public.

## 5. REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

This section provides the results of work performed over the past year on the objectives as outlined in the NLGNB's 2011-14 Activity Plan. Each objective pertains to an issue of key importance to the NLGNB.

### 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, 2014 the NLGNB will have focused on the improvement of the 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"><li>Geographical names collected and entered in dataset.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>700 provincial geographical names were added to the dataset. These will be discussed at future meetings.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revisions made to current names in dataset.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2,042 existing database records were edited and uploaded to the federal dataset.</li><li>This total includes positional coordinate and attribute updates.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revisions made to feature coordinates to improve accuracy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revisions made to dataset to feature coordinates to improve accuracy. Coordinate updates are now done on an as needed basis.</li></ul>

**Discussion of Results:** In Newfoundland and Labrador the provincial and federal datasets are synonymous. The NL records are entered into the federal dataset via a web-based non-public application.

### Issue 2: Digital Delineation

Digital delineation is a new and precise method of mapping the geometry of a given geographical feature or place name. These standards are developed on a national level. While many water features have already been identified as part of the national hydrology layer, the NLGNB has made significant progress in delineating many water and land features.

**Objective 2:** By March 31, 2014 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"> <li>Features delineated digitally and entered into a geometry database.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Features have been digitally delineated and entered into a geometry database. All provincially authorized digital delineations are currently held in a non-public federal database. These delineations will be made available to the general public within the next few months.</li> </ul>

Discussion of Results: During this planning cycle the NLGNB has implemented a digital delineation process. These feature geometries have been stored in a non-public federal dataset. These delineations are scheduled to be made available to the general public within the next few months.

### Issue 3: Commemorative Naming Program

On a number of occasions, the NLGNB has been requested to assist in celebrating significant historical events by recommending approval of appropriate names for associated geographical features.

Objective 3: By March 31, 2014 the NLGNB will have worked towards a strategy for a provincial Commemorative Naming Program.

Performance Measure: Work progressed on strategy.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research conducted on existing programs in Canada.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In respect to the development of a provincial commemorative naming strategy, the NLGNB has chosen to deal with commemorative names on an as needed basis. The NLGNB did not receive any commemorative naming applications in the report period.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Names proposed to provincial and/or federal jurisdictions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NLGNB did not recommend any commemorative naming applications during the report period.</li> </ul>

Discussion of Results: In reference to the development of a commemorative naming strategy, the NLGNB has decided that commemorative naming applications should be dealt with on an as needed basis. In the planning cycle commemorative names were recommended as they arose.

### Issue 4: Communications

The NLGNB has gained a higher profile due to the use of the internet and an increased effort to reach out to members of the public for input on issues arising from previous field surveys.

Objective 4: By March 31, 2014 the NLGNB will have engaged in activities to increase the visibility and profile of the NLGNB.

Performance Measure: Engaged in activities to increase visibility and profile.



Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add new links to the existing departmental website which highlight the geographical naming process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New links are under consideration for the departmental website. These documents will be posted pending executive approval.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact volunteer, local residents who are knowledgeable about the toponymy of the Province.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential geographical names contributors were identified in Happy Adventure, Ship Cove, Rigolet and the West Coast of Newfoundland. Additional name submissions are pending.</li> <li>Contacts in Gambo and central Newfoundland indicated that forest access roads in these respective areas had names in local usage and that some were sign-posted. Forest officials with the Department of Natural Resources at Gambo, Clarenville and Corner Brook when contacted explained that they are now required (since the damage done by Hurricane Igor) to provide names for forest access roads in their districts and these names could be submitted to the NLGNB for consideration as official names. It was explained that these names are important to forestry and recreation activities and are significant also for improving fire protection and search and rescue efficiencies in inland areas.</li> <li>In February 2014 the Innu Nation submitted 582 geographical features names in Labrador. These submissions will be processed and discussed at the next NLGNB meeting in June 2014.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of speaking engagements by the NLGNB.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Gregory Jeddore, Forestry Manager, Miawpukek First Nation of Samiajij Miawpukek (Conne River), gave a presentation of his work/history and stressed the importance of preserving the cultural heritage of his people.</li> <li>Mr. Dan Myles, Supervisor, Forestry Engineering, Corner Brook, Department of Natural Resources, gave a presentation on the use of Forest Access Roads in this province. Mr. Myles indicated that there are in excess of 6,000 kilometres of these forest access roads which require sign-posting. The maintenance of these roads is important for cabin owners, Search and Rescue, firefighters and woods operators. Opportunity for collaboration exists between the NLGNB and the Forest Engineering &amp; Industry Services Division, Department of Natural Resources.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articles published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List of Communities in Newfoundland and Labrador, online <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_communities_in_Newfoundland_and_Labrador">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_communities_in_Newfoundland_and_Labrador</a></li> <li>David E. Scott, <i>Newfoundland and Labrador Place Names</i>, Allanburg, Niagara Falls, DesPub, 2013.</li> </ul>

Discussion of Results: The attendance of guest speakers at NLGNB meetings has increased the visibility and profile of the NLGNB among key stakeholders in the province. Stakeholder participation at meetings provides valuable insight into the geographical naming process.

## Issue 5: Involve Schools in the Geographical Naming Process

The provincial school system is an excellent venue to exhibit the importance and relevance of the province's rich cultural history. Youth can play an active role in the collection of the geographical names that have become part of their family's history. By encouraging such active participation in the name collection process youth can play an active role in the preservation of their own cultural history.

Objective 5: By March 31, 2014 the NLGNB will have worked on a strategy for the introduction of the geographical features into selected schools within the Province.

Performance Measure: Work commenced on strategy.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Contact the Department of Education to determine the best curriculum choice to introduce geographical names.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There were no activities carried out during the reporting period regarding this issue. The NLGNB underestimated the time required to complete this action.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engage in consultation and involvement with the Department of Education with respect to the implementation of this process in selected schools within the Province.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Draft a proposal to implement the geographical names process in the school system.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Contact the necessary school boards to get permission to introduce the geographical names project into the curriculum.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Choose a school to implement the program as a pilot project.</li></ul>	

Discussion of Results: No school has been selected in this planning cycle. This pilot project is still being evaluated at the interdepartmental level.

## 6. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

<b>Statement of Expenditures</b>		
<b>NLGNB Expenditures</b>	<b>Total 2013-14 Expenditures</b>	<b>Projected 2014-15 Expenditures</b>
Professional Services (Chair)	\$3015.00	\$3,015.00
Travel Expenses	\$409.07	\$750.00
Meeting Expenses	\$545.89	\$1,000.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$3969.96</b>	<b>\$4,765.00</b>
The above stated Expenditures and Projection are verified correct.		

Funding to support the work of the Newfoundland and Labrador Geographical Names Board was provided to the entity by the Survey and Mapping Division of the Department of Environment and Conservation.