



Council of Geographic Names Authorities
COGNA 2023, Portland, Oregon
Oregon Historical Society
1200 SW Park Ave

Native American Student and Community Center
710 SW Jackson St.
Portland, OR 97205

"Names on the Land: Past, Present, and Future"

Conference Dates
September 12 – 16, 2023

Welcome to CoGNA – Portland 2023!

We thank you for joining us this year at CoGNA – in beautiful Portland, Oregon! We are indebted to our wonderful hosts on the Oregon Geographic Names Board, who have worked for many months to help organize this conference and share their beautiful state with all of us!

CoGNA is both a very large and simultaneously very small organization; we comprise state geographical representation from every state (and now territories), but that means usually less than 50 of us are having a conversation at any given time. We are working to ensure ALL 50 of states and participating territories are connected, and part of the national dialogue with regard to place name issues, and you being here and part of this conference is the foundation of growing this dialogue.

CoGNA works best if you are active in the organization. Please work with your own boards, local governments, and interested parties to ensure they are aware of CoGNA, and pass on the information learned at or through CoGNA to those you work with at the state and regional level(s). Almost every state has been active in the COGNA organization during the last year, with connections being made, requests for help and information shared, and general discussions over email is now happening – all a result of simply (re)connecting in this forum. We are glad you are here, happy to reconnect, and welcome you to what we hope will be many more annual meetings in the future.

I serve as the Executive Secretary for CoGNA, elected in November of 2021, and effective January of 2022, but 'found' CoGNA originally back in 2015 – when searching “geography conferences” online. When I arrived at the conference and realized what CoGNA was (and that my own state had not been active in years), I was quite surprised to realize I was an active member in this organization that I had never heard of until then. Since 2015, I've hosted and attended the subsequent conferences – almost always on my own time and funding – just because the information and the networking is so helpful and meaningful. It is my hope that ALL states and territories will eventually be funded to perform the work they do as State Names Authorities (SNAs), which includes traveling to this conference to continue our conversations, learn from our colleagues in other states and within the USBGN, and build our networks of support, and broaden our connections with our Tribal communities and other stakeholders. Please share the information with your boards, your networks and communities – be sure CoGNA is part of the institutional knowledge of your state teams, and let's keep this growing – and going!

Kindest regards,

Christine Johnson
Executive Secretary, CoGNA
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Welcome to Portland, Oregon

Portland is geographically situated at the confluence of two great rivers, the Willamette, and the Columbia. Over the centuries, both rivers have been identified by numerous names, many spoken by Indigenous peoples and recorded by Europeans when they arrived. British Royal Navy Officer Lieutenant William Broughton and his crew were the first Europeans to make a written record of the Willamette River in October 1792. Broughton crossed the Columbia River bar on his ship the *Chatham*. Broughton and his men took two small work boats and rowed more than 100 miles upstream to a turn-around point (now Point Vancouver). Broughton saw this river (now called the Willamette) and named it the River Mannings. Lewis and Clark never saw the Willamette River during their trip westward as they camped on the north side of the Columbia, their view of the mouth of the Willamette obscured by an island. But Clark and a small expedition did explore it briefly on their return trip in 1806 thanks to a tip from local Indians. Clark called the river the Multnomah. But the naming did not end there. Other documented names for the Willamette (Wil-AM-ette) River include: the Multnoomah, Multnumah, the Oualimet, Wahlamath, Wal-lamt, Walla Matt, Wallamat, Wallamatte, Wallamet, Wallamette, Wallammet, Wallamut, Wilarmet, Wilhamet, Willamett, and the Willamitte. Many explanations for the name have been proposed over the years. In recent years, both historical and linguistic evidence strongly points to the name of the Chinookan-speaking village at Willamete Falls, Walamt, as the ultimate source of the name. The name is most definitely not French in origin.

On May 11, 1792, four months before Lieutenant Broughton and his men rowed up the Columbia, American mariner Robert Gray crossed the dangerous bar of the Great River of the West and anchored his ship several miles upriver. Gray named his discovery Columbia's River after his ship, *The Columbia Rediviva*, which also had the nameplate *Columbia*. Gray's "discovery" of the Columbia River is meant to signify that he was the first to open to global interests a part of the world populated by Indigenous peoples for several millennia. Native Americans who lived within this part of the river basin had their names for the Columbia River, including Wimahl (Chinookan), Nch'i-Wána (Northwest Sahaptin or Ichishkin), and Schanúkw-qa (Upper Chehalis). Non-Native names have included the Rio de San Roque, River Oregon, Ouragan, River of the West, and the Oregon River.

The land where Portland is now located was, for centuries, the homeland of Chinook-speaking tribes, including the Multnomah, Clackamas, and Watlala. The Kalapuyan and Molalla peoples and many other family bands and tribes made and continue to make their homes along the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. This is important as we acknowledge the ancestors of this place and recognize we can be here in part because of the sacrifices forced upon them. In acknowledging these communities, we honor their legacy, lives, and descendants.

This part of our country is rich with Indigenous language, so it was easy for the OGNB to choose a theme for our 2023 CoGNA Conference. It is "Names on the Land: Past Present and Future," with a nod to George Stewart, one of the great writers on the history of people and place. This year's conference will demonstrate what we see as a blossoming interest across our land in learning about Indigenous place names. We think we will provide a showcase for some of the great work that is going on in this area of knowledge.

We hope you enjoy your time in Portland and Oregon. We want CoGNA 2023 to succeed and enlighten and inspire you.

Bruce Fisher
President, Oregon Geographic Names Board

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Tuesday, September 12th

Location: Oregon Historical Society Pavilion (1200 SW Park Ave.)

Registration & Opening Reception

- 2:00 - 5:30pm: Conference registration, packet pick up
5:30 - 7:00pm: Welcoming Reception: (No host bar, Hors d'oeuvres OHS Pavilion/Lobby)

Wednesday, September 13th

Location: Native American Student and Community Center (710 SW Jackson St.)

Opening remarks, Presentations, Federal training, Business meeting

- 7:30 - 8:30am: Registration and packet pick up. Location: NASCC
8:30 - 8:45am: Housekeeping announcements, online connections
8:45 – 9:15am: Introductions and opening remarks, NASCC Spokesperson, Kerry Tymchuk, J.D., Oregon Historical Society, Dr. Christine Johnson CoGNA
9:15 - 10:00am: **Working with Tribes and Native Communities on the Process to Rename Mt. Evans**, Johnie Abad and Tim Mauck, Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board
10:00 - 10:45am: **Choctaw Place Names: Reconnecting with our Homelands**, Ryan Spring, M.S., Research Coordinator/GIS Specialist – Historic Preservation Department; Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
10:45 - 11:00am: Break
11:00 - 11:45am: **Colonial Indigenous Names in Canada**, Dr. Lauren Beck
11:45 - 1:15pm: Lunch provided (Light buffet/Indigenous food theme)
1:15 - 2:00pm: **Returning Native Names to the Land in Oregon: a Discussion on Mount Halo, Nestucca Bobb Creek and Chemeketa Creek**, Dr. David Lewis – Ethnohistorian, Oregon State University
2:00 - 2:45pm: **Kalapuyan Geographic Names: Some Results of Recent Research**, Dr. Henry Zenk
2:45 - 3:00pm: Break
3:00 - 3:30pm: **Federal Training: Procedures and Policies Regarding Native Place Names: Policy X and Cultural Sensitivity Statement For Native Americans**, Andrew Flora, Elizabeth Kanalley, Susan Lyon, Tara Wallace – Members, U.S. Board on Geographic Names
3:30 – 4:15pm: **Restoring Indigenous Place Names: The work of the Kumisión i Fino' Chamoru yan i Fina'nâ'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tâno'**, Dakota Camacho, M.A.
4:15 – 4:30pm: **Update on Secretarial Order 3405 for SNA's**, Dr. Andrea Dekoter – Committee Manager, and Dr. Rachel Pereira – Vice-Chair, Federal Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names
4:30 – 5:00pm: CoGNA Business Meeting (Open to all)

Optional evening plan: Walking tour of downtown Portland

Thursday, September 14th

Location: Native American Student and Community Center (710 SW Jackson St.)

Executive Committee Meeting, State Naming Authorities Reports, Federal-State Roundtable Q&A's, Training

- 7:30 - 8:30am: Executive Committee Meeting
8:00 - 8:30am: Registration and Packet pick up at NASCC
8:30 - 10:00am: State/Territory Reports
10:00 - 10:30am: Break
10:30 - Noon: ***Training Session for State Naming Authorities (SNAs) - BGN proposal process review; SNA roles; GNIS demonstration (Jennifer Runyon, Matt O'Donnell, Maria McCormick)***
Noon - 1:30pm: Lunch on your own
1:30 - 2:00pm: ***Training Session for SNAs: [NOAA Custom Chart](#) (NCC) (Thaddeus Ellerbe, NOAA)***
2:00 – 3:30pm: ***Training Session for SNAs: Federal/State Roundtable Workshop***
3:30 - 3:45pm: Break
3:45 - 5:00pm: ***Training Session for SNAs: Federal/State Roundtable Workshop (cont'd)***

Optional Evening Plan - 6:00pm:

Informal no-host social and optional tour at Historic McMenamins Crystal Hotel

Friday, September 15th

Location: Native American Student and Community Center (710 SW Jackson St.)

OGNB meeting, Presentations, USBGN meeting, Federal training, CoGNA 2024 Intro, Announcements, Wrap-up

- 8:00 - 8:30am: Registration & Packet pick up. Location: NASCC
8:30 - 10:30am: ***Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) Meeting***
10:30 - 11:00am: Break
11:00 - Noon: ***Between Laws and Hard Places: The Impacts of Re-Naming Legislation on the Infrastructure and Priorities of State Naming Boards***
(California Advisory Committee (Richie Lis, Amy Loseth) on Geographic Names, Nevada State Board on Geographic Names (Paul White, Christine Johnson), and Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board (Tim Mauck)
Noon - 1:30pm: Lunch on your own
1:30 - 3:00pm: ***US Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) Meeting***
3:00 - 3:45pm: Break
3:45 - 4:30pm: ***Shash Jaa': Bears Ears and the Power of Indigenous Place Names*** (Angelo Baca), followed by film screening: *Shash Jaa' : Bears Ears*, by Dr. Angelo Baca
4:45 – 5:00pm: CoGNA 2024 Announcement (Chris Barnett, Missouri Board on Geographic Names)

Saturday, September 16th*

Location: Meet at 8:30 am at Oregon Historical Society (1200 SW Park Ave.)
9:00am-4:00pm: Optional Toponymic Session

Coach bus trip to the Lower Columbia River Gorge, via parts of the Historic Columbia River Highway from Troutdale to Cascade Locks.

Join OGNB representatives on a toponymic bus tour. We begin the tour in Troutdale, the Gateway to the Columbia River Gorge. We proceed eastward to connect to the historic Columbia River Highway where we will drop down onto I-84 East and follow along the southern shore of the Columbia River past Multnomah Falls, Rooster Rock, Vista House, Wahkeena Falls, Bonneville Dam, Bridge of the Gods, and the Cascade Locks. We will stop for lunch (box lunches provided) at the Cascade Locks Marine Park, and visit Thunder Island and the Cascade Locks Historical Museum. Wear comfortable clothing and sturdy footwear (it can get very windy, in the Gorge!). On our return trip, we will try to make time to visit Rocky Butte in Northeast Portland, where you will get a grand view of the Portland (Wapato) Basin.

Requires additional fee – be sure to register for **full conference with toponymic session at initial registration, or register separately on the website for any additional attendees. Registration for toponymic session can be made as individual reservation as well at conference registration site. Register at <https://cognaconference2022.regfox.com/council-of-geographic-names-authorities-cogna-annual-conference-or-2023> or contact Christine Johnson at ckjohnson@cogna50usa.org for more information. Reservations for this session must be made prior to 9/1/2023.

Abstracts

Working with Tribes and Native Communities on the Process to Rename Mt. Evans

The Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board worked over the course of a year in consideration of six proposals to rename Mount Evans, one of Colorado's most popular and identifiable mountains. With an elevation of 14,264ft, the highest peak along the Rocky Mountain Front Range, and visible from Denver, the process to rename the mountain was extensive. This talk will review the process and timeline behind the renaming, and the efforts made by the CGNAB to work with multiple tribes and native community members in the process.

Choctaw Place Names: Reconnecting with our Homelands

Since time immemorial, Choctaw people have been stewards of our homelands. This relationship with our homelands is evident in the descriptive names we place on the land. Over time, western imperialism and cultural genocide have disconnected many Choctaw people from these places. However, by empowering our traditional geospatial knowledge with modern mapping tools, we can use GIS to map the relationships that our communities have with these landscapes. The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Historic Preservation Department has created a database of Choctaw place names that is used daily to protect and preserve the historic and sacred sites. We encourage you to come and listen to a few examples of Choctaw place names and how they are still a part of our community today.

Returning Native Names to the Land in Oregon: a Discussion on Mount Halo, Nestucca Bobb Creek and Chemeketa Creek

Oregon has had several significant name restorations lately, one of the most widely covered being Mount Halo. This talk will review several specific sites including Mount Halo, and highlight some of the controversy, the challenges, and the efforts made to restore Native Names to these spaces.

Kalapuyan Geographic Names: Some Results of Recent Research

Kalapuyan languages are today represented by an immense paper corpus preserving the knowledge of some of the languages' last L1 (first-language) speakers. We owe this resource to a handful of linguistically-trained scholars trained to transcribe languages phonetically from live dictation; some audio recordings do exist, but these are quite limited. This documentary resource includes a modest sampling of Indigenous Kalapuyan geographic and ethnic names. As in other local Indigenous languages, Kalapuyan names on the land were closely tied to the activities and lifeways of the peoples bestowing the names. Major topographic features like large rivers and mountains were usually referred to by generic terms only; and biographical names, so characteristic of English, were conspicuous by their absence. Some, albeit very few of these names were adopted by Euro-American settlers and survive as contemporary English geographic names. The contemporary spellings of these names have in some cases evoked controversy, with some advocating their revision to more clearly reflect their Indigenous origins. Part of my purpose here is to examine issues raised by such revisionism.

Federal Training: Procedures and Policies Regarding Native Place Names: Policy X, Cultural Sensitivity Statement

Tribal input is invaluable to US Board on Geographic Names decision making. Numerous feature name proposals are on lands that have been traditionally associated with federally recognized Tribes, reference native languages, or commemorate historical persons from Native American cultures. The BGN Principles, Policies, and Procedures document has established the role of federally recognized Tribes regarding feature names on tribal lands in Policy X.

However, new guidelines have been established for name proposals outside of Tribal land. These new guidelines address the need for Tribal input on name proposals that draw on Tribal names, language, and culture. These guidelines recognize the Tribes as stewards of their culture as it relates to feature names throughout the United States. The presentation will explain these new guidelines and their significance to the Tribes and proponents generally.

The presentation will also address ongoing efforts by the US Board on Geographic Names to reach out and engage the Tribes on issues relating to feature names.

Federal Training: Training Session for State Naming Authorities (SNAs): BGN proposal process review; SNA roles; GNIS demonstration

This presentation will provide an overview of the BGN proposal process and how the BGN staff manages each new proposal (new names, and name, spelling, or application changes) in accordance with its Principles, Policies, and Procedures for Domestic Geographic Names. The BGN staff will describe its research methods and its interaction with interested parties, including local governments, State Names Authorities, Federal land management agencies, Tribal governments, and other interested parties. They will outline what information is required so that the BGN can make informed decisions on geographic names for Federal use. The presentation will also include a demonstration of the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), the BGN's official names database, its search and display functions, and how it is used to support the BGN's naming process.

Federal Training: NOAA Custom Chart (NCC)

[NOAA Custom Chart](#) (NCC) is an online application that enables users to create their own customized nautical charts directly from the latest official NOAA electronic navigational chart (NOAA ENC®) data. This presentation will offer demonstration in how to use the site and access the information it provides.

Shash Jaa': Bears Ears and the Power of Indigenous Place Names

Naming who you are and where you come from is essential to Indigenous communities. It connects one to a family, a lineage, maybe even a clan or community. It makes your relationships and friendships part of a larger social and cultural system of kinship, or what we call in Navajo *K'é*, which means that we are never alone. Naming a sacred place without the involvement and input of the people who originally deemed it sacred does not honor them or give them adequate recognition. This talk will discuss the process and collaborative effort to restore the name of Bears Ears Monument, and follow with a screening of Dr. Angelo Baca's award winning film Shash Jaa'.

Between Laws and Hard Places: The Impacts of Re-Naming Legislation on the Infrastructure and Priorities of State Naming Boards

Secretarial Orders 3404 and 3405 have already impacted and will likely continue to have trickle down effects on how state geographic names boards work through proposals for new, alternative, and restorative names.

These recent federal actions occur concurrently with state laws that have broader reach in what State geographic names boards are generally tasked to do. They have also prompted internal discussion about how to better arrange organizational procedures. This panel session will highlight recent state legislation in California and Nevada highlight changes in board processes and procedures, and feature discussion on managing new state legislation in the face of Federal orders with regard to names on the land.

Presenter Biographies

Johnie Abad is an Executive Assistant for the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, and the Administrator for the Colorado Geographic Naming Advisory Board. Johnie provides high level support to the Department of Natural Resources Leadership Team as well as the Governor's office, internal and external stake holders. She has served the State of Colorado in similar positions for 25 years.

Angelo Baca is an Assistant Professor at Rhode Island School of Design, and is a cultural activist, scholar, filmmaker and recent PhD graduate in the Department of Anthropology at New York University, where he focused his research on Bears Ears National Monument. He is also the cultural resources coordinator at Utah Diné Bikéyah, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the defense and protection of culturally significant ancestral lands. *Shash Jaa': Bears Ears* is Baca's latest award-winning film about the five tribes of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition that work together to protect 1.36 million acres of Utah wilderness through a national monument designation. He published the widely read op-ed in *The New York Times*: *Bears Ears Is Here to Stay*. Recently, he worked with Patagonia on the public lands film *Public Trust*, about the current administration's assault on Indigenous and public lands. He has research interests in Indigenous international repatriation, Indigenous food sovereignty and sacred lands protection. His work reflects his commitment to collaborative research with Indigenous communities on equal and respectful terms and a long-standing dedication to both Western and Indigenous knowledge. He continues to focus on the protection of Indigenous communities by empowering local and traditional knowledge keepers in the stewardship of their own cultural practices and landscapes.

Lauren Beck is a professor of visual and material culture studies and the Canada Research Chair in intercultural encounter at Mount Allison University, and the author of *Canada's Place Names & How to Change Them*.

Andrea "Andie" DeKoter holds a PhD in U.S. History, with an emphasis in Women's History, from the State University of New York – Binghamton. Dr. DeKoter joined the National Park Service (NPS) full-time in 2008 as an interpretive Park Ranger at Women's Rights National Historical Park. Her other NPS assignments include serving as an interpretive Park Ranger at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, as the Legislative Affairs Researcher in the Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs, as the acting Superintendent of Women's Rights National Historical Park and Harriet Tubman National Historical Park, and most recently as the Chief of Interpretation and Education at Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site and Richmond National Battlefield Park. She currently serves in the NPS Office of Policy as the Committee Manager for the Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names.

Thaddeus Ellerbe is a cartographer for the Marine Chart Division for the Office of Coast Survey at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). His team's charting responsibility includes the coastal waters in the mid-Atlantic. He has an AAS in Applied Geography from Montgomery College. This fall he will begin teaching cartography at his kid's homeschooling co-op.

Andrew Flora joined the US Bureau of the Census in 1987 as a geographer in the Philadelphia Regional Office. He currently works as a team leader in the Line and Point Features Branch of the Census Bureau's Geography Division where he manages projects to support address ranges, ZIP Codes, and geographic feature names and classification codes in the MAF/TIGER database. Andrew Flora has served as a deputy member on the US Board on Geographic Names/Domestic Names Committee since 2009 and was the Domestic Names Committee Chair for the 2017-2019 term. Andrew Flora received his master's degree in geography from the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1985 and received a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from the University of Delaware in 1982.

Christine Johnson is the Executive Secretary of the Nevada State Board on Geographic Names, as well as for the Council of Geographic Names Authorities. She is the Executive Director for the Sparks Heritage Museum in Sparks, Nevada, and also serves as adjunct faculty in the departments of Anthropology and Geography at the University of Nevada, Reno teaching courses in cultural geography, cultural anthropology, world regions, and museum studies. Christine holds a PhD in geography from the University of Nevada, and a

master's degree in anthropology. In 2021, she was appointed to the Federal Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names and serves as the Chair of the Subcommittee on Principles and Processes.

Betsy Kanalley is the Geospatial Products and Services Program Manager for the U.S. Forest Service. She provides oversight to the design, development and delivery of Forest Service geospatial products and services. Betsy had represented the Department of Agriculture on the US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) since 1999. She is currently Chair of the BGN Special Committee on Native American Names and Tribal Communication. Betsy began her federal career as a cartographer, working for the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA), and was part of the DMA Special Office on Modernization. She later moved to DMA Headquarters where she managed bilateral agreements and collaborative mapping initiatives with NATO partners. Betsy is a native of the New York Finger Lakes Region and currently resides in Frederick, Maryland.

David G. Lewis is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Indigenous Studies at OSU. David is a member of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, a descendant of the Takelma, Chinook, Molalla, and Santiam Kalapuya peoples of western Oregon. He served as Cultural Department manager, curator, and historian of the Grand Ronde Tribe and help plan and open the Chachalu Museum. David researches Oregon tribal histories, and their traditional ecological knowledge, conducts presentations about tribal histories, and writes essays for publication and for his blog, the Quartux Journal at ndnhistoryresearch.com. David's book, *Tribal Histories of the Willamette Valley* is being published by Ooligan Press and is available November 2023. He is currently teaching and contracting with local tribes and municipalities about local tribal history. David lives in Salem with his wife Donna, and sons Inatye and Saghaley.

Richard Lis is the Chair of the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names and a Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Northern Region. Growing up in Portland Oregon one of his favorite books was Lewis MacArthur's Oregon Geographic Names. How geographic features were named and their history was always fascinating. This was heightened by family trips to camp, rock-hound, and visit ghost towns in eastern Oregon and Nevada. We loved the high desert region. Still have lots of family in Portland and come back here all the time to visit. He attended Wilson High School in Portland, and Portland State University and earned B.S. in Earth Sciences with a minor in Botany. Then graduate school at University of California Berkeley in Paleontology Dept (Master's Degree work) and Botany Dept. (Ph.D.). Specialty in plant systematics of Rose family shrubs, paleobotany, plant ecology, plant conservation, riparian and wetland ecology. Also a current member of the Oregon Historical Society and Oregon Rail Heritage Center.

Amy Loseth is the Vice Chair of the California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names (CACGN) and is a member of CACGN's subcommittee working on the implementation of California Assembly Bill No. 2022, which legislates the removal and replacement of offensive and derogatory names throughout the state. She has a master's degree in library and information Science and serves as the Librarian for the California Geological Survey within California's Department of Conservation.

Susan Lyon has worked as a research geographer since 2015 at the US Army Corps of Engineers, Engineer Research and Development Center, Geospatial Research Laboratory. Her research interests include quantitative human geography, migration, spatial epidemiology, and remote sensing. She has represented the Department of Defense on the US Board on Geographic Names since 2017, and served as Chair of the USBGN Domestic Names Committee for fiscal years 2022 and 2023. She earned undergraduate and master's degrees in geography from George Mason University.

Tim Mauck serves as the Deputy Director for the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR), working across all DNR divisions and with the Governor's Office to develop and coordinate policy as well as manage day-to-day operations of the agency. Tim has worked in various capacities for local, state and federal governments, with a majority of his career focused on natural resource policy and management. Prior to joining the Department of natural resources, Tim served two terms as a Clear Creek County Commissioner from 2010 – 2019. Tim represents DNR on the Colorado Geographic Naming Board, and served the past two years as Board Chair.

Matthew O'Donnell Matt O'Donnell, an employee of the U.S. Geological Survey's National Geospatial Program in Reston, Virginia, has been a staff researcher for the BGN's Domestic Names Committee since 2013, most of that time as a contract employee. He assists Jenny in support of the BGN's mission and has attended four previous CoGNA conferences. He is interested in the regional distributions of toponymic generics and in applying data science methods to toponymic research.

Rachel Pereira serves as the inaugural Vice President of Equity and Inclusion at St. John's University. Formerly a senior legal and policy advisor for EdCounsel of Nelson Mullins, LLC, Dr. Pereira has a multidisciplinary background and experience in the education and legal industries having served as a teacher, school principal, prosecutor, legal counsel to educational institutions, and as an adjunct professor at three graduate schools. She served the New Jersey Department of Education as a policy advisor and Confidential Assistant to the Commissioner of Education where she worked on myriad of issues, including school finance reform, school desegregation, diversity and inclusion, early childhood education reform, Title I school performance, teacher recruitment strategies, statewide student assessment, and school evaluation reform. Dr. Pereira is presently serving as the Vice-Chair of the Federal Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names.

Jennifer Runyon is an employee of the U.S. Geological Survey's National Geospatial Program in Reston, Virginia, and has been a staff researcher for the BGN's Domestic Names Committee since 1994. Her primary role is to interact with proponents, State Names Authorities, Federal agencies, and others, including Tribal governments and members, to assist in the Federal naming process. This will be the 22nd CoGNA conference in which she has participated, all but one in person.

Ryan Spring is an enrolled tribal member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. Although he grew up in California and Arkansas, his family is mainly from the Hugo, Oklahoma area. He has worked in the Historic Preservation Department since 2011 and have served as the GIS/GPS Specialist, Department Director, and now currently serves as a Research Associate/GIS Specialist. He obtained my B.S. in Anthropology from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, Arkansas and in 2017, received his M.S. in Native American Leadership from SOSU in Durant, Oklahoma. Ryab takes great passion in working to assist the Choctaw community in its efforts to revitalize Choctaw traditional culture and history preservation. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with family and playing stickball for the Choctaw Nation Tvshka Homma Stickball Team. He resides in Calera, Oklahoma with his wife Kathia and two beautiful nieces Amiya and Kinsley. Yakoke!

Tara Wallace is the current Department of Commerce's Member to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN). She is the Chief of a Production Branch (southeast U.S.) within NOAA's Marine Chart Division. Tara is an adjunct faculty with Montgomery College, Rockville Maryland campus teaching in the Applied Geography Program. Her education consists of applied geography (AAS), business administration (BBA); and parks and recreation resource management (MS).

Paul White is an Associate Professor of Geography at the University of Nevada, Reno, and Chair of the Nevada State Board on Geographic Names. A historical archaeologist by training, his research investigates the historical paths of industrialization and colonialism, with a particular focus on the Western mining industry. He has conducted archaeological research in several U.S. states, as well as Wake Island, Nevis, Cornwall, and the North Island of New Zealand, where he was born and raised.

Henry Zenk is an Oregonian by birth, and was introduced to the study of Northwest languages and lifeways by Wayne Suttles, late professor of Anthropology at Portland State University. He subsequently documented Chinuk Wawa from surviving elder speakers of the Grand Ronde Indian Community in Oregon, drawing upon his results for the PhD in anthropology (University of Oregon, 1984). He has been a linguistic consultant for the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde since 1998.



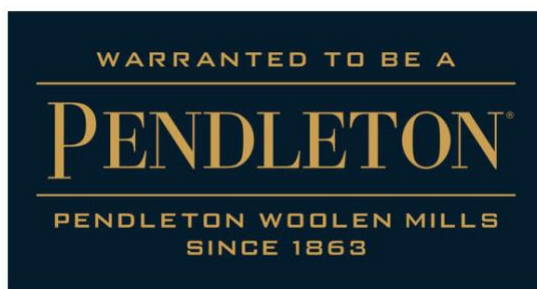
***The Missouri Board on
Geographic Names invites
you to the CoGNA
Conference in beautiful
Columbia in 2024!***

***Save the date:
Week of September 16, 2024***

Future Hosts of COGNA:

- 2024 – Columbia, Missouri
- 2025 – Denver, Colorado
- 2026 – Sacramento, California
- 2027 – Announcement coming soon

CoGNA Portland would like to thank the following for their generosity and support:



The Native American Student and Community Center is located 10 blocks from the Oregon Historical Society. Follow SW Park Avenue south. The entrance to the NASCC is on SW Jackson Street.

