

**DRAFT Recommendations from the Education and Outreach Subcommittee
Advisory Committee on Reconciliation in Place Names
for June 10-11, 2024, Rapid City, SD Meeting**

The following draft recommendations can be prioritized based on additional framing by the full Committee. Some potential framing lenses to use include:

- Short term (1-3 years) vs. long term (4 or more years) timeframe.
- Time sensitive actions, such as completing testimonials with elders.
- Budgetary limitations (what can be accomplished within existing funds vs. what will require additional resources).
- Focus on recommendations that are already in process and build upon existing efforts.
- Work with groups that are already interested in replacing derogatory names.
- Prioritize recommendations that impact Tribes who are the original namers.
- Focus on educational components then move to engagement to build on increased awareness and understanding of the process.
- Actions to be accomplished by the Federal government vs. using partners to advance actions.

EDUCATION/ENGAGEMENT

(a) The Department should develop a simple, easy-to-understand, graphically pleasing [visual aid](#) (e.g., flow chart, diagram, or pictogram) that clearly explains the process used to name (or rename) geographic features by the Board on Geographic Names (BGN). It should include the steps to submit a naming proposal, who are the key players in the review process, and where submitters can go for more information. Could be posted on the BGN website, shared at conferences, featured in social media posts, and given to schools and communities.

(b) The Department should produce a series of [testimonials or a documentary](#) featuring Tribal members (especially elders) or other affected communities impacted by derogatory names who successfully worked to rename features on the landscape (ex. changing Mount Evans to Mount Blue Sky in Denver). Could be posted on the BGN website, featured in social media posts, and used for educational purposes.

(c) The Department should [update the BGN website](#) to provide more engaging and interactive information and tutorials on the naming process; the role of the BGN, State Naming Authorities, and communities; and updated FAQs.

(d) The Department should identify several [large annual conferences](#) (e.g., Tribal conferences, geographic/cartographic conferences, State Naming Authority conferences) and send BGN reps to explain the naming process and how people can submit proposals to change derogatory or offensive names. Could have a booth, participate in panels, or provide an informational session during the conferences.

- (e) The Department should [develop educational materials and curriculum](#) on how teachers and other educators can discuss derogatory names, their impact on communities, how to use the BGN process to change them, and how this is not censoring but communicating our history. Curricula should be geared towards different age groups and include assessments and measurable goals, and be based on report or landscape analysis on effective methods for reaching a variety of audiences.
- (f) The Department should conduct research on what type of [media engagement](#) works for different audiences then based on that information develop a [social media strategy](#) to highlight the work of the BGN and the naming process, and why the work matters.
- (g) The Department should conduct a series of [town hall meetings](#) online to provide information to communities, Tribes, organizations, and the public who are interested in the naming process. These could be advertised in the Federal Register.
- (h) The Department should provide [briefings to both Senate and House staff](#) on the existence of the BGN, the naming process and why public input is so important, and current actions at the Federal level on managing place names (such as the work of this Committee). Also use that opportunity to provide a point of contact to their individual State Naming Authorities.
- (i) The Department should create an [online newsletter](#) related to the work of the BGN and the naming process. Interested individuals and organizations could sign up to receive it.
- (j) The Department should inventory [what resources already exist](#), such as bureaus who have staff that create websites or tutorials, then utilize those resources to support these recommendations.

PARTNERSHIPS

- (a) The Department should [partner with existing external organizations and influencers](#), such as IllumiNative, that have followers and audiences on social media to help them amplify the Committee's work and the renaming process. Could also do that for TV shows like Molly of Denali that appeal to youth.
- (b) Establish a [formal partnership](#) agreement between the Departments of the Interior and Department of Education to develop curricula on teaching about derogatory names, the naming process, and how to have these difficult conversations.
- (c) The Department should encourage [State and local government websites](#) to review materials related to place names and update the information to be more accurate and use less demeaning language.

RESOURCES

(a) The Department should identify [additional resources](#) to improve outreach and education to Tribes, States, and communities. These resources could include hiring an outreach coordinator for the BGN; offering funding to Tribal Preservation Offices, Tribes, and others to support their renaming work; or hire a contractor to produce audio-visual materials such as testimonials and updating the BGN website.

(b) The Department should identify additional resources for communities to create [updated interpretive signage](#) in locations where names have been changed to provide context, explain the history of the older name and its impact on communities and groups, why it was considered derogatory and changed, and to encourage discussions.

GENERAL

(a) The Department should provide materials in [languages](#) other than English to reach a wider audience; tailor information for specific communities into popular languages (e.g., if large Portuguese community, then have materials in Portuguese).