

Missouri Board on Geographic Names  
05-02 Meeting  
Interpretive Center  
James Kirkpatrick Building  
Missouri Office of the Secretary of State  
Jefferson City, MO  
November 10th, 2005 Minutes

Attendees: Chris Barnett, Ken Dagele, John Fisher, David Kreighbaum, Gary Kremer, Jane Messenger, Lynn Morrow, Russ Mueller, Frank Nickell, Walter Schroeder, Henry Sweets, Jay Turner, and Jerry Vineyard.

Guests: Jerry Vineyard introduced Dwight Weaver, prospective new Board Member. Also in attendance was Jeanne Martin, Administrative Secretary for the Local Records Division who will be recording MOBGN minutes.

Absent: Ray Fox, Tony Holland, and Gordon McCann.

Walter called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He gave a brief overview of the day's agenda beginning with a few formalities before Jane's presentation. Walter anticipates the presentation will continue after lunch with the business meeting after her presentation.

### **Call for Proxies**

At this time Walter called for proxies. Jay Turner carried a proxy for Ray Fox. Walter Schroeder carried a proxy for Gordon McCann. Lynn Morrow carried a proxy for Tony Holland.

### **Introduction of Guests**

Jerry Vineyard introduced Dwight Weaver. Mr. Weaver retired in 2000 as the Public Information Specialist with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geology and Land Survey. He is now working on Historical projects and writing. Walter let Board Members know Dwight is here because the Board will vote on Dwight's membership on the Board during the business meeting. At this time members and guests introduced themselves.

### **Status of USGS and Jane in Rolla**

Jane let Board Members know that on September 15<sup>th</sup> the USGS decided to close their National Geospatial Technical Operations Center (NGTOC) in Rolla, and everyone employed there would lose their jobs. The USGS decided to centralize the NGTOC in Denver, CO. This decision was questioned severely. Missouri politicians have forced

this decision to be placed on hold for the time being. Jane said if anyone present can help, please contact whoever they can to keep the Rolla office of the USGS open.

### **Presentation by Jane: Why Is That Stream Called a School?**

Jane began her presentation “Is it really called this?” - a discussion of 605,000 plus geomorphic features in the 50 states and DC she would like investigated for correct usage. Jane explained that geomorphic names identify naturally occurring features. She pointed that the USGS leaves out prepositions and articles in their geomorphic names. Jane feels this makes many of these geomorphic names incorrect as to their generic and feature class. Geographic names based on other languages can prove difficult also. For example, in the Hawaiian language two words are often slammed together to make a geomorphic name.

In all, Jane has identified 605,116 names she reviewed, and shared with members her plan of attack for determining whether these names are correct or incorrect. First step is to determine the true generic. Second, compare the true generic to the feature class. And third, ask “Does the generic fit the class”? Jane said she goes to the GNIS website - [www.geonames.usgs.gov/gnis\\_users\\_guide\\_appendixc.html](http://www.geonames.usgs.gov/gnis_users_guide_appendixc.html) - to find a match for the true generic; however, some of the names don't have generics. For example, Eye Opener, AK is an island, and Turn Off The Wash, AZ is actually a bend in a river. The Ant and The Yellowjacket, ID is an arch! GNIS recognizes ‘gut’ but does not recognize ‘gutt’, referring to Rattlesnake Gutt, MD, which is a stream.

She told Board members she is working with all the states to get corrections on these incorrect names. She wants Missouri to do the same. She also asked that, as Lynn finds information on old maps, to share that knowledge with her. She would like members to provide pronunciation keys with the names they investigate. She would like members to verify the 410 Missouri names she questioned mostly by looking at the source from which the name came and checking to see if the name was entered correctly into GNIS.

### **Presentation by Jane: Work on Missouri Questionable Names and Demonstrating GNIS Web Edit Entry Form**

Jane proceeded with a discussion of an 80 page word document entitled Missouri Questionable Names. This document is a list of geomorphic names in Missouri she feels may not all be correct. She wants all Board members to help verify these names and asked Walter how to go about this task. Walter expressed trepidation about using GNIS on-line, saying technology is not a comfortable medium for him, and asked if Jane can do the GNIS entries. Jane agreed to help with GNIS entries, but said she does want help with the research.

For those members willing to do the GNIS work, Jane began her demonstration of how to use the GNIS Website. She was asked to look up College Heights, MO and clicked the search button on screen. GNIS placed College Heights at what was the original location which is no longer populated - the population is up the road in a newer area. Jane was

asked how GNIS describes a populated place, as a cluster of scattered buildings, or with permanent population. David Kreighbaum asked if members can submit new names for places. Jane said yes, new names can be submitted. However, she asked that members make sure there are two College Heights before taking such action. Lynn Morrow was asked if names on maps changed a lot and if names were lost between old maps and new maps. Lynn said that in the Bootheel of Missouri lots of names are lost. Lynn suggested that a source for information be the pre-Depression era maps. Jane wants members to search out current local usage by talking to the people who live in the area. Walter asked if members have Biblio Codes to use and Jane said these codes are included in the Questionable Names document. Walter asked about identifying the Biblio Citation. Jane said to combine the Biblio type and the state to get the correct Citation. She has already done this in the document distributed to members. Walter said he wants to work with a given set of sources on this research, adding that if something needs to be checked out he will ask someone in the field to go to the source.

Another source of information is the Ramsay Files. Walter explained that the Ramsay Card File was a project started by Robert L Ramsay in 1928 and continued through 1945. Initially it was done by graduate students in the Department of English, University of Missouri. The first cards done in 1928, 1929, 1930, and 1931 were sketchy but later ones are more detailed. It was field research and not much work was done from maps, mostly verbal descriptions. Lynn agreed that their methods were not what we consider good solid research today. Gary Kremer said the Ramsay files at the University of Missouri Ellis Library would take about 24 hours to retrieve. Lynn offered that there are copies of the masters' theses here at the Archives, adding that if a group requested copies they would be paper copies.

Jane continued to demonstrate how GNIS can help with this research by pulling up topozone information on a few geomorphic names from the Missouri Questionable Names document. Russ Mueller asked how members can determine what names need to be changed. Jane suggested talking to the locals and then looking at the feature. She referred to the topozone map of Baxter Ponds, where it is very clear that there actually are two separate ponds with separate drainage areas. She feels just looking at the feature on GNIS has settled the question. Chris Barnett suggested that a sort can be made by county if members chose to use the digital county files. Lynn suggested that one way to get information from the Ramsey files would be to sort by the Ramsey theses which are composed of blocks of counties? Jane agreed and explained her search pattern.

At this time Jane asked everyone to send her what they want to work on. Ken Dagele asked if members should just send the geographic area they want to research. Jane asked members to send what you're willing to work on, or want to work on, and then information can be sent regarding that geographic area. Walter asked if Lynn will send a list of Ramsay files to him and Lynn agreed.

Chris Barnett made reference to a project from 2 years ago that Ray Fox said may be coming up for a new round of funding and maybe the Board can expand the scope of this project to cover some of the concerns with the new project. Chris said he doesn't want to

slow Jane's project down waiting for funding to come through on his project. Lynn asked if this new project can be constructed to attach the areas we feel would be the most problematic for new names. Chris said he thinks the people behind this new project want more broad areas involved. Jane said she doesn't think GNIS is going to look at where, in a state, the maintenance work has been done. Chris added that Homeland Security is behind the project he is involved with.

Jane said the Missouri Questionable Names project is maintenance more than adding new names. Walter added that new names may come up as maintenance is done. Jane asked what other information members want her to send them. Jane referred members to the GNIS website for a definition of the different classes. Jane suggested that the Frequently Asked Questions section is also helpful. In response to a question, Jane said primary coordinates refer to the mouth, and source coordinates refer the headwaters.

After some discussion it was decided that Jane will gather information from the members as to the area they want to work, she will make a list of what everyone is working on, and if duplicate areas appear, the members will have to decide between themselves. Then Jane will give that information to Walter, Gary and Lynn and go from there. Gary and Lynn will supply copies of the Ramsay place name work. Jane will gather recommendations from members and submit them via e-mail to GNIS providing information and recommendations.

At this time Board Members enjoyed a catered lunch buffet by Chez Monet with a little time to relax before the business meeting at 1:00.

### **Business Meeting**

Walter called the meeting to order at 1:00. Lynn reported that Archives has nineteen 3-ring binders of the Ramsay theses only for members interested in requesting copies of material.

### **Minutes from May 2005**

Walter requested corrections, additions, or deletions to the minutes from the May 2005 MOBGN meeting. With no changes requested, Walter asked for a motion to approve. Henry Sweets moved that the minutes from the May 2005 MOBGN meeting be accepted as read. Jay Turner seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **Gubernatorial Appointments**

Walter explained there are two kinds of members for the MOBGN. There are representatives from state and federal agencies, and there are gubernatorial appointments. As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005 eight gubernatorial appointments expired. All eight presented vitas to the Governor's Office, Boards and Commissions Division. The new administration changed the form the previous administration used so the eight members had to resubmit on new forms. Some members had reservations about filling in portions of the new form

because there were questions about political party affiliation and a background check. Frank Nickell did sign this section and submitted his form for a different state board only to find out that he owed \$1.67 in state taxes – which proved to be very difficult to pay! It took six months to accomplish! IRS doesn't notify you of delinquent taxes if the amount is under \$100.00 so he was never notified.

Walter spoke with Mr. Heath at the Governor's Office, Director of Boards and Commissions, and was told the section on political affiliation does not need to be signed, nor does the section involving the Senate, but the background check needs to be done. He also assured Walter there should be no problem with reappointment for the existing members. Walter said all appointed members continue as members in good standing under our bylaws until someone is appointed to replace them, and that has not happened yet.

Frank asked how many vacancies there are on the Board. Walter and Jane decided there are three and that according to the MOBGN bylaws voting members are not to exceed 19. Walter let board members know that, according to the minutes from the May 2004 meeting, there is still a request on the table that members can suggest people for these vacancies. Jane expressed concern that the Governor can just start filling up the Board. Gary Kremer said the Governor took the position that he is not reappointing people if they are already on a Board. Jane said the current bylaws state board members are appointed for three year terms just so a Governor can't 'stack' the board. Jane asked members if they want to change the bylaws to change the term length to six or nine years. Walter said such a change needs to fit into the bigger view with our statutory status and asked how that is coming along. Lynn said that the Secretary of State's office still has this on their plate for the next session. Gary said he might be able to use his lobbyist and would talk to Lynn about this matter. Jane took the opportunity to announce that the Board celebrates their Tenth Anniversary this month because the Executive Order creating MOBGN was signed November of 1995.

At this time Walter requested a vote by members on the acceptance of Dwight Weaver as a new Board member. Frank Nickell moved that Dwight Weaver be a member of the Board, subject to gubernatorial appointment. Chris seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **Report on COGNA 2005 in Portland, OR by Jane**

Jane attended the COGNA meeting in Portland, Oregon. The first day was a toponimic tour to Mount Hood. The second toponimic tour was on the Saturday following the conference and it was to Fort Clatsop, which had just burned two weeks earlier. Jane said the tour of the Maritime Museum was very interesting. There were lots of old maps and it was very interesting to hear about the rescue boats. She said one rescue boat was made to flip end-over-end. Jane reported that the Domestic Names Committee accepted both Little Manitou Rock and Little Manitou Rocks, that they passed 100%. She said she will send an e-mail to Jim Denny with the results. Walter asked if there are any domestic names for Missouri pending with COGNA. Jane said yes, Whitewater River is still

pending and is 5 years old now, saying that Jenny Runyon put it on the back burner because she is the only one on staff to handle case research. She has not had the time to contact the Missouri counties involved. Jane had contacted all counties twice but never got any reply. Chris asked about a time limit for consideration. Jane said that she is now writing letters to counties stating that if she doesn't hear by a specific date the MOGBN will assume that the county has no opinion. Jane said we need some sort of written response from Scott, Stoddard, and Bollinger counties, especially since they're challenging the suggestion.

### **Additions to the Agenda**

Walter asked if there are any additions to the Agenda. Chris Barnett requested a letter of support from MOBGN for the 2 year old project that is being considered for further funding. Chris said Lou Yost was head of the project two years ago, but he believes Roger Payne has taken Lou's place now. Walter asked if members consent to the writing of this letter. Frank asked how much funding is involved and Chris said no more than \$5,000. Jane said this is problematic because the Domestic Names Committee is staffed by one of the USGS offices that are to be closed, depending on the outcome of the final decision on closing these offices by the NGTOC commission. Walter said he would provide a letter of support.

Lynn passed around a print out of the membership as listed on the SOS webpage and asked members to please look it over and update it. At this time Jane also requested that everyone please send her an e-mail so that she will have everyone's current address.

Walter announced that the new Blue Books are out, and asked Lynn if MOBGN is in it. Lynn said he thinks so. He gave Publications all the information.

Jane announced to members that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of May 2006 will be the 18<sup>th</sup>, so that is the date for the next MOBGN meeting.

With no further business Walter adjourned the meeting.

Thanks to Jane for the usual bounty of sweets, and thanks to Local Records for the lunch.