
GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

GEOGRAPHIC NAMES are the proper names of particular Earth features, places, and landmarks. They identify areas of cultural and administrative responsibility, define political boundaries, and provide legal evidence of property, mineral, and water rights. The Geological Survey, therefore, is obliged professionally and legally to use official names in all its publications and on all its maps. The choice, form, spelling, and application of official place names for Federal usage are determined by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names.

THE U.S. BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

Established in 1890, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names was organized in its present form by public law in 1947. Its mission is to serve the Federal Government and the general public as a central authority for solving problems, making decisions, and answering inquiries about geographic names. Any person or organization, public or private, may request the Board to decide formally on new names, name changes, or conflicting names.

The Board is composed of representatives from several Federal agencies, and it shares its responsibilities with the Secretary of the Interior. It is authorized to establish and maintain uniform geographic-name usage throughout the Federal Government. It formulates principles and policies governing the use of foreign and domestic names and names of undersea and extraterrestrial features.

NATURE OF GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

Geographic names normally originate in and are influenced by spoken language. This fact is important because the Board is concerned mostly with written forms of names, including matters of spelling, capitalization, word form, and writing marks that have little to do with spoken language.

Most geographic names are binomial in that they have two parts, denoting species and genus: Middleton (Middletown), Coal Hollow, or Sierra Nevada. The generic part tells the kind of place, feature, or area the name refers to, and the specific part modifies or uniquely identifies the particular place, feature, or area. The generic part of the name is usually a single

topographic term such as brook, hill, bay, peak, mesa, or lake; the specific part may consist of one or more words such as Grosse Roche, Jenny Lind Run, and Casale Campo di Carne. The binomial form is strong and in written usage may lead to combining specific parts of the name, such as Threemile Run and Redhill Gulch. The names of some features can be long, especially if the specific part is a prepositional phrase: Cliffs of the Seven Double Pillars, Foot of the Mountains Run, and Cañon del Rajadero de los Negros.

Some names have unique generic forms; consider, for example, colorful American names like Bald Alley (ridge), Butlers Toothpick (pinnacle rock), Titans Piazza (hill), and Devils Racepath (ridge). Variations of the binomial form are one-word names that require a capitalized article: The Bend, La Pica, The Cape, The Nose, and The Maze.

Single-word specific names such as Boston, Oalite, and Pinhook are common for populated places and civil divisions; the kind of feature meant is implied by sentence context.

Several names with the same generic word may be treated as a group in text with the generic word capitalized and in plural form: Calumet, Manitowoc, and Sheboygan Counties; Wisconsin and Illinois Rivers.

THE GEOGRAPHIC NAMES INFORMATION SYSTEM

The National Geographic Names Data Base is managed by the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). The system currently has more than 2 million name records in the data base. These records include the names of natural features, populated places, civil divisions, areas and regions, and culture features such as mines, churches, schools, cemeteries, hospitals, dams, airports, and shopping centers. Official names are appropriately identified in the data base, which also includes records of named features not under the purview of the Board on Geographic Names. Each record includes the following information:

- ▶ Written form of the official or primary name.
- ▶ Term identifying the kind of named feature.
- ▶ Location and, if applicable, extent of feature by geographical coordinates.
- ▶ Map on which feature can be located.

- ▶ Elevation of feature, when appropriate.
- ▶ Official or nonofficial status of name and application (not all names in the data base are official).
- ▶ Variant names and spellings for the same feature.

Information from the data base can be retrieved, analyzed, and organized. Geological Survey personnel may access GNIS through the Earth Sciences Information Network (ESIN) or may request special searches and printouts from:

- ▶ Manager, GNIS, National Center, Reston, Virginia.
- ▶ Earth Science Information Center offices.

PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL STANDARDIZATION

The Board on Geographic Names is guided by the following principles in determining official names of places, features, and areas in the United States and its territories:

1. **Use of the Roman alphabet.** Official domestic geographic names are written in the Roman alphabet as normally used in the English language. Exceptions are occasionally made for Spanish and French names that have diacritical marks (see “Diacritical Marks in Domestic Names”). Names written in other forms of the Roman alphabet and in other alphabetical scripts may be used in parentheses after the official name.
2. **Names in local usage.** The underlying philosophy of the Board for establishing official geographic names and their applications recognizes present-day local usage or preferences, except when local spoken or written usage conflicts with specific Board policy or when the preferences of State or local governmental authorities disagree with local usage. Where local usage is weak or conflicting, well-established, documented names and names with historical significance receive strong consideration.
3. **Names established by act of Congress.** Geographic names and their applications specifically established by an act of Congress are official by law. Geographic names used incidentally in the language of an act of Congress enacted for other purposes are not necessarily official, unless the language clearly indicates that naming is part of the intent of the act.

4. **Names established by other authorities.** The Board on Geographic Names normally accepts as official the names of political subdivisions, bounded administrative areas, structures, and establishments in the United States and its territories, as determined by the appropriate responsible public or private authorities.
5. **One name for one geographic entity.** The Board will identify one name, spelling, and application as official for a geographic entity in the United States, its territories, and outlying areas. For certain entities, a shortened version of the official name also may be authorized for use in Federal publications; for example, State of Wisconsin and Wisconsin; New York City and New York.

SPELLING GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

Geographic names, like other proper names, are not subject to the spelling rules that apply to other words in the English language. The Board establishes standard spellings of geographic names in the United States for use by the Federal Government. Although these spellings generally conform to rules of English, they reflect historical spellings or forms commonly used or preferred by local citizens and may, therefore, include what appear to be grammatically incorrect, misspelled, improperly combined, or clipped words.

DETERMINING OFFICIAL NAMES

Only official domestic geographic names will be used on Federal maps and in other publications. An official name is one in which the written form of that name and its application to the appropriate place, feature, or area are approved by the Board on Geographic Names. The primary reference for official names and their applications is GNIS. Names not in GNIS or not identified as official in GNIS must be submitted to the Board for approval before they can be used for Federal publication.

This procedure does not apply to the names of offices or establishments of governmental agencies or to the names of certain manmade features such as streets, roads, shopping centers, churches, schools, hospitals, and airports (see principle 4) or to those names used for historical reference or other similar situations in which the geographic names are not intended to represent current official usage.

DOMESTIC NAMES DECISIONS

Name problems and proposals submitted to the Board are researched individually by the Geological Survey support staff and are put on a monthly docket list for consideration by the Domestic Names Committee. Each list is sent to cooperating Federal and State agencies and to interested organizations and individuals about a month before the meeting at which the list is to be considered. Reviewing the merits of each case, the Committee decides between conflicting names and approves or disapproves proposed new names and name changes. Some actions are deferred temporarily to allow more time for State and local response or to get more information needed for a decision. A record of the decisions at each monthly meeting is submitted to the Secretary of the Interior for review. Decisions of the Domestic Names Committee automatically become decisions of the Board on Geographic Names and are published in a quarterly decision list.

GEOGRAPHIC NAMES POLICIES

For uniformity in the decision-making process and to assist in national standardization, the Board on Geographic Names has policies and procedures that deal with particular naming problems or issues. The selected policies that follow are particularly relevant to the activities of the Survey. (A complete, up-to-date set of domestic name policies, with guidelines, may be obtained from the executive secretary for Domestic Geographic Names, care of 523 National Mapping Division, U.S. Geological Survey, Reston, VA 22092).

PROPOSING NEW NAMES

When a name is proposed for an unnamed domestic feature, a report on the new name must be submitted to the Board for approval before publication of the document that uses the name. Proposed new names should be unique and euphonious, if possible, and not unduly long or clumsy. They should be acceptable to local citizens and should not be controversial. Indian or other ethnic names, if appropriate, and names suggested by local history or by a peculiarity of the topographic feature, such as form, vegetation, or associated animal life, are generally acceptable. Commonly duplicated words like elk, bald, mud, duck, round, or cottonwood should be avoided. The generic part of the name should conform with names common to the area, and the relational naming of forks, prongs, and branches of streams or canyons, such as East Fork or Middle Prong, should be avoided if

possible, though such names sometimes need to be given to conform to existing relational names.

New-name proposals for features in national parks and wilderness areas should be coordinated with park or wilderness supervisors before being submitted to the Board. The number and kind of new names approved for such features is restricted.

The following information should accompany new names submitted to the Board:

- ▶ Full name being proposed.
- ▶ Location and clear identification of feature.
- ▶ Reason for needing a name.
- ▶ Origin or meaning of proposed name.

The Board on Geographic Names will consider proposals to assign the names of deceased persons to geographic features in the United States and its territories. The Board will not consider names that commemorate or may be construed to commemorate living persons. In addition, a person must have been deceased for at least 1 year before a commemorative proposal will be formally considered. The person should have had some direct association with the feature or should have made a significant contribution to the area or State in which it is located. A proposal commemorating an individual with an outstanding national or international reputation will be considered even if the person was not directly associated with the geographic feature.

A person's death, as in a mountaineering accident or a plane crash on or at a feature, or the mere ownership of land or the feature, does not normally meet the "direct association" criterion.

A proposal to commemorate an individual should contain evidence of local support for the proposed name and its application. Such evidence may be in the form of letters from local residents and administrative agencies or petitions containing original signatures of local citizens.

If the name being proposed commemorates a person, the following additional information is needed:

- ▶ Full name of the person.
- ▶ Birth and death dates (years).
- ▶ Person's title and profession or occupation.
- ▶ Person's association with the feature or area.

A short biography of the person is useful, and an annotated map showing the location and extent of the feature is helpful. Because the Board works closely with interested Federal and State agencies, State geographic boards, and local citizens before deciding on a name, final action on a proposal may take from 3 to 6 months.

PROPOSING NAME CHANGES

The Board will consider proposals for changing names, but it does not encourage changes in domestic names except where official Federal usage disagrees with well-established local usage or where existing names are derogatory or are duplicated. The reason for change should always be stated when a proposal is submitted to the Board. Information should include the identity of the feature, the origin or meaning of the new name, and the possible response of local citizens to the name change.

LONG AND SHORT FORMS OF NAMES

According to principle 5, the Board identifies one name, form, spelling, and application when adopting an official domestic geographic name. All other forms or spellings of the same name, or other names for the same entity, are considered variant names and are not official for Federal use. Two exceptions relate to name forms: The Board allows optional use of long or short forms for incorporated places and political divisions (New York or New York City, Virginia or the Commonwealth of Virginia). The second exception permits the omission in text of the generic parts of names of a few classes of natural features such as rivers, oceans, and deserts. These names in sentence context are normally preceded by the uncapitalized definite article; for instance, the full specific-generic forms of such names are shown on maps (Potomac River, Mojave Desert, and Atlantic Ocean), but the author may drop the generic part in sentence context and refer to “the Potomac,” “the Mojave,” and “the Atlantic.” When first used in text, or when its name could be misunderstood, the full name of the feature should be used.

PARENTHETICAL USE OF VARIANT NAMES

The Board does not allow the use of an official name in parentheses, but a variant name in parentheses may be used with an official name if needed for clarity or reference. For example: Echo Park (Pats Hole). The independent use of any name other than the official name is not approved.

Use of a variant name in parentheses following an official name on a Federal map or in a report is at the discretion of the author and the issuing agency. On a map, a parenthetical name may appear either following the official name or below it. It should always be clear which name is the official one.

Names using special symbols to indicate glottal stops and stress, such as those derived from the Hawaiian language, are considered to be variant

names, and each may be used in parentheses after the official name on maps or in text. The Board does not object to the listing of such variant names alone in a tabular or dictionary format to convey such special information as pronunciation, name origin, or word meaning. A statement can be made explaining the purpose of the table or dictionary and why the listed names vary from official names.

UNACCEPTABLE DEROGATORY NAMES

For domestic geographic names, the Board will not adopt a name for Federal usage that is derogatory to a particular ethnic group, religion, or class of people, even if the name is used locally. Other unseemly names are unacceptable also.

DIACRITICAL MARKS IN DOMESTIC NAMES

Diacritical marks are rarely used in English, but they are common in many other languages, including Spanish and French, from which many place names in the United States are derived. Most geographic names adopted from these languages have been assimilated into English usage and therefore lack the diacritical marks that were included in the original spelling. In some places in the United States, however, especially where Spanish or French is still spoken, local custom may indicate that diacritical marks should be used. Diacriticals are important if their omission would cause a significant change in the meaning of the name in the parent language. Diacritical marks, however, are officially excluded in a few names such as Canon City in Colorado (not Cañon City).

The presence of diacritical marks will not necessarily bar approval of a geographic name; each such name is considered individually. A spelling that includes diacritical marks will be approved if, in the judgment of the Board, substantial evidence such as official records, maps, and signs indicates active local use in the area where the feature exists.

The Board does not approve for Federal publications the use of writing marks in the written forms of geographic names derived from the Hawaiian and native American languages. Names using special marks not normally found in the English language are considered variant names (see principle 1).

NAME DUPLICATION

Name duplication means that two or more nearby places or features of the same kind have the same

name in local or published usage. Name duplication does not exist when places or features of different kinds have the same name, such as a stream called Long Creek and a village called Longcreek or Long Creek.

Names proposed for unnamed geographic features that duplicate another name in the State, or nearby in an adjoining State, will not normally be approved.

The Board on Geographic Names encourages State and local governments and local citizens to change or modify duplicate names wherever ambiguity is likely. Such name changes should be coordinated with the Board.

The Board normally does not initiate name changes to eliminate duplication. If duplication in Federal publications might cause confusion, the Board may add a modifier such as "East," "North," "South," "West," "Big," "Little," "Upper," "Lower," or "Middle" to one or more of the duplicate names. This option would be coordinated with State geographic names authorities. In States that lack an authority, the Board tries to work with appropriate local governments and citizens to promote an interest in eliminating the duplication. A name submitted as an alternative to a duplicate name should conform to the policy for naming an unnamed feature.

PUNCTUATION MARKS

Punctuation marks such as hyphens and apostrophes are used occasionally in domestic geographic names. Usage varies, and care should be taken to use the standard form for a particular feature. Hyphens are sometimes used in names consisting of a phrase (Hole-in-the-Wall, Go-to-it Creek, Be-Cha-Tu-Da Draw) and in names having a dual-form specific (Clark-Mallard Ditch, Alma-Cassville Trail).

Apostrophes suggesting possession or association are not used within the body of a proper name (Pikes Peak, Henrys Fork). The word or words that form a geographic name change their function and together become a single denotative unit. The need to imply possession or association does not exist. Thus, we write "Jamestown" instead of "James' town" or even "Richardsons Creek" instead of "Richard's son's creek." "Martha's Vineyard" is a longstanding exception. The whole name can be made possessive or associative with an apostrophe at the end as in "Rogers Point's rocky shore." Apostrophes also are often used within the body of a geographic name to denote a missing letter (Lake O' the Woods) or when they normally exist in a surname used as part of a geographic name (O'Malley Hollow).

ABBREVIATIONS AND NUMBER NAMES

Names of States can be abbreviated according to standards of STA 7 (p. 104). Other geographic names are not abbreviated in sentence context except that "Mount" and "Saint(e)" may be abbreviated as "Mt." and "St(e)." On maps and other illustrations, the generic part of a name and also a few modifiers may be abbreviated ("Middle," "North," "South," "Left," "Right," "Saint(e),"), but if space is available, they are better spelled out. The specific part of a geographic name may not be abbreviated even in illustrations.

Except as rarely approved, numbers in names should be spelled out (Arabic numerals are number symbols, not words):

Fortynine and One Half Creek
Fourmile Run

CAPITALIZATION OF GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

With few exceptions, all words considered part of a proper geographic name are capitalized, including all adjectives, common nouns, and the definite article:

Adams Apple	Little Captain Island
Alva B. Adams Tunnel	Los Caños
Big Hill	Old Fundamental Church
Big Hole Basin	Pee Dee Ditch
Cuchilla Buena Vista	The Crooked Esses
Dark Hollow Brook	The Hogback
Farm River Gut	Upper Sulphur Creek
Lac Arnois	West Side Pond

Exceptions to the rule of capitalization include articles and prepositions within multiple-word names:

Alto de la Cruz	Posta de Roque
Cañada de Ojo del Agua	Red River of the North
Fond du Lac	Rock of Ages
Gap in Knob	Scarce of Fat Ridge
Lake of the Ozarks	Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes

As noted earlier, when the generic part of a name is purposely omitted, as in "the Potomac," "the Mojave," and "the Atlantic," the definite article preceding the specific name is not capitalized. Proper names of geographical entities, such as regions, political divisions, populated places, localities, and physical features, including marine, are capitalized in both the singular and the plural:

Allegheny Front
Andromeda Cone
Atlantic Coastal Plain

Bach Seamount
Bighorn Basin
Blue Ridge
Brady Soil

Canal Zone
Central States
Catahoula Parish
Colorado Plateau
Colville Guide Meridian
Continental Divide
Continental Rise
Continental Shelf

Dennison Township
Driftless Area

Eastern Shore

Fall Line
Fall Zone
Far East (Asia)
Front Range

Grand Banks
Great Lakes
Gulf States

Half Dome
High Plains

Isle of Pines
Lower Town Landing

Mariana Trench
Middle Atlantic States
Monarch Geyser
Mount Rainier

Niagara Falls
North Atlantic States
North Slope

Outer Continental Shelf
Pacific Coast States
Pine Ridge Reservation
Potomac and James
Rivers

St. Stephens Base Line
San Joaquin Valley
Second Principal Meridian
Skyline Drive

The Chute
Tidal Basin

Upper Peninsula
U.S. Gulf Coast

White Pass Recreation
Area
West Coast (of the
United States)
Western States

NAMES OF REGIONS, LOCALITIES, AND GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

To repeat for emphasis, a descriptive term used to denote a definite region, locality, or geographic feature is a proper name and is therefore capitalized; also, for temporary distinction, a coined name of a region is capitalized.

the North Atlantic States; the Gulf States; the Central States; the Pacific Coast States; the Lake States; East North-Central States; Eastern North-Central States; Far Western States; Eastern United States

the West; the Midwest; the Middle West; Far West; the East (United States)

the Eastern Shore (Chesapeake Bay)

the Badlands (South Dakota and North Dakota)

the Continental Divide (Rocky Mountains)

Deep South; Midsouth

Cape Hatteras Recreational Area; *but* Silvertip Mine area

the Occident; the Orient

the Far East; Far Eastern; the East

Middle East, Middle Eastern, Mideast, Mideastern (Asia)

Near East (Balkans)

the Promised Land

the Continent (continental Europe)

the Western Hemisphere

the North Pole; the North and South Poles

the Temperate Zone; the Torrid Zone

the East Side, Lower East Side

but lower 48 (States); the Northeast Corridor; Hollidaysburg quadrangle

A descriptive term used to denote mere direction or position is not a proper name and therefore is not capitalized:

north; south; east; west

northerly; northern; northward

eastern; oriental; occidental

east Pennsylvania; southern California

northern Virginia

west Florida; *but* West Florida (1763–1819)

eastern region; western region

north-central region

east coast; eastern seaboard

central Europe; south Germany; southern France

PHYSICAL DIVISIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

The terms “province” and “section” are regarded as common nouns by the Government Printing Office

East Tennessee
Greater New York (City)
North Atlantic (Ocean)

South Mississippi
South Pacific (Ocean)
Upstate New York

and are not capitalized in the GPO Style Manual, but as listed below, they are used consistently to refer to

specific physiographic entities and, therefore, are proper names and should be capitalized. (See p. 271.)

<i>Major division</i>	<i>Province</i>	<i>Section</i>	
Laurentian Upland Atlantic Plain	Superior Upland		
	Continental Shelf		
	Coastal Plain	Embayed Section Sea Island Section Floridian Section East Gulf Coastal Plain Mississippi Alluvial Plain West Gulf Coastal Plain	
Appalachian Highlands	Piedmont Province	Piedmont Upland	
		Piedmont Lowland	
		Northern; Southern Section	
	Blue Ridge Province	Tennessee Section	
		Middle Section	
	Valley and Ridge Province	Hudson Valley	
	St. Lawrence Valley	Champlain Section	
	Appalachian Plateaus	Northern Section	
		Mohawk Section	
		Catskill Section	
		Southern New York Section	
	New England Province	Allegheny Mountain Section	
Kanawha Section			
Cumberland Plateau			
Cumberland Mountain Section			
Seaboard Lowland			
New England Upland			
White Mountain Section			
Interior Plains	Green Mountain Section		
	Taconic Section		
Interior Highlands	Adirondack Province		
	Interior Low Plateaus	Highland Rim	
		Lexington Plain	
		Nashville Basin	
	Central Lowland	Eastern Lake Section	
		Western Lake Section	
		Wisconsin Driftless Section	
		Till Plains	
		Dissected Till Plains	
	Great Plains	Osage Plains	
		Missouri Plateau, glaciated	
		Missouri Plateau, unglaciated	
		Black Hills	
		High Plains	
		Plains Border	
Colorado Piedmont			
Raton Section			
Pecos Valley			
Edwards Plateau			
Central Texas Section			
Interior Highlands	Springfield-Salem Plateaus		
	Boston "Mountains"		
Rocky Mountain System	Arkansas Valley		
	Ouachita Mountains		
Rocky Mountain System	Southern Rocky Mountains		
	Wyoming Basin		
	Middle Rocky Mountains		
	Northern Rocky Mountains		
Intermontane Plateaus	Columbia Plateaus	Walla Walla Plateau	
		Blue Mountain Section	
		Payette Section	
	Colorado Plateaus	Snake River Plain	
		Harney Section	
		High Plateaus of Utah	
		Uinta Basin	
		Canyon Lands	
		Navajo Section	
		Grand Canyon Section	
	Basin and Range Province	Datil Section	
		Great Basin	
		Sonoran Desert	
		Salton Trough	
	Pacific Mountain System	Sierra-Cascade Mountains	Mexican Highland
			Sacramento Section
			Northern Cascade Mountains
			Middle Cascade Mountains
Southern Cascade Mountains			
Pacific Border Province		Sierra Nevada	
		Puget Trough	
		Olympic Mountains	
		Oregon Coast Range	
		Klamath Mountains	
Lower Californian Province	California Trough		
	California Coast Ranges		
	Los Angeles Ranges		

GEOGRAPHIC-GEOLOGIC NAMES

Formal geologic-time and stratigraphic units are considered to have proper names, and the usual rules of capitalization apply. (For rules governing usage of these units see "Stratigraphic Nomenclature and Description.") Between strictly geographic and strictly geologic terminologies lie many named features that have both geographic and geologic significance. Names of such features, if used consistently to refer to specific entities, may be regarded as proper names and should be capitalized:

Book Cliffs Coal Field	Lillie Belle Prospect
Killarney Claim	Matchless Mine

Many geologic, nonstratigraphic terms that have geographic significance are widely viewed as proper names and are capitalized routinely in technical journals, in professional society guidebooks, and in the popular media.

If a geographic name is linked consistently to a specific nonstratigraphic feature, the combined name should be regarded as a proper name and both parts should be capitalized. Not to do so may confuse the intended meaning (Blackadar and others, 1980, p. 35). STA 7 continues to support such usage, following the lead of STA 6. A few examples:

Cincinnati Arch	Teapot Dome
Sunset Crater	Rangely Anticline
Mother Lode	Golden Fault
Nacimiento Uplift	Wyoming-Utah Thrust Belt
Uinta Basin	Mount Taylor Volcanic Field

Terms for areas of indefinite extent or context, and ordinary generic terms, are generally not capitalized:

ABC mining district	Taconic region
Lexington area of Kentucky	Uravan mineral belt
Livengood gold placer deposit	

FOREIGN GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

Foreign names are handled by the Foreign Names Committee of the Board on Geographic Names, which is supported by an executive secretary and staff furnished by the U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Mapping Agency. The basic policy for determining standard names in foreign countries that use the Roman alphabet is to accept as official the written forms of names recognized locally. Names in countries that do not use the Roman alphabet are converted according to standard guides. The Board cooperates with agencies of foreign governments and with the United Nations to standardize foreign names for U.S. Government use.

Some diacritical marks (p. 105) may be essential to the spelling and form of official foreign names. These marks should be used as specified by the Board. The official standard forms of foreign names have been published by the Board in more than 100 gazetteers. Copies are in the U.S. Geological Survey libraries in Reston, Va., Denver, Colo., and Menlo Park, Calif., and also in more than 600 Federal, State, university, and local libraries. Readers are encouraged to report errors in the gazetteers to the Executive Secretary, Foreign Geographic Names (address below). The source of the correction should be identified.

For names of foreign countries, for features such as large bodies of water outside national boundaries, and for a few populated areas and natural features in foreign countries, the Board also has approved optional use of names that are conventional with English-speaking nations: "Jordan River (Mahr al Urdunn)," "Rome (Roma)."

The Board has published both a "Romanization Guide" and a "Conventional Names Gazetteer." Requests for these books, and inquiries concerning foreign gazetteers and foreign place names, including those of undersea and extraterrestrial features and Antarctica, should be addressed to Executive Secretary, Foreign Geographic Names, U.S. Board on Geographic Names, Defense Mapping Agency, Washington, DC 20305.