

**NEW BRUNSWICK  
TOPONYMY STEERING  
COMMITTEE**

**2009-2010 ANNUAL REPORT**

March 31, 2010

Hon. Hédard Albert  
Wellness, Culture and Sport

Dear Minister:

I am honoured to present the second annual report of the Toponymy Steering Committee for the period from April 1, 2009, to March 31, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard-Marie Thériault  
Chairperson

**NEW BRUNSWICK  
TOPONYMY STEERING COMMITTEE**

Toponymie Nouveau-Brunswick



Toponymy New Brunswick

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## ■ Introduction

This is the second annual report of the Toponymy Steering Committee. It covers the period from April 1, 2009, to March 31, 2010.

The first part of the document presents the Steering Committee's membership, organization and mandate. The second part describes the activities carried out during the past year of operation, the results and the extent to which expectations were met. The third part presents the new names and name changes that have taken place since the Steering Committee was established. The report ends with a conclusion.

## Part 1 – Toponymy Steering Committee

### ■ Members

Bernard-Marie Thériault  
Chairperson

Elizabeth Augustine  
Member

Susan Blair  
Member

Matthieu LeBlanc  
Member

Elizabeth McGahan  
Member

Fidèle Thériault  
Member

Jean Gaudet  
Special Advisor

Gilles Bourque<sup>1</sup>  
Manager/Secretary

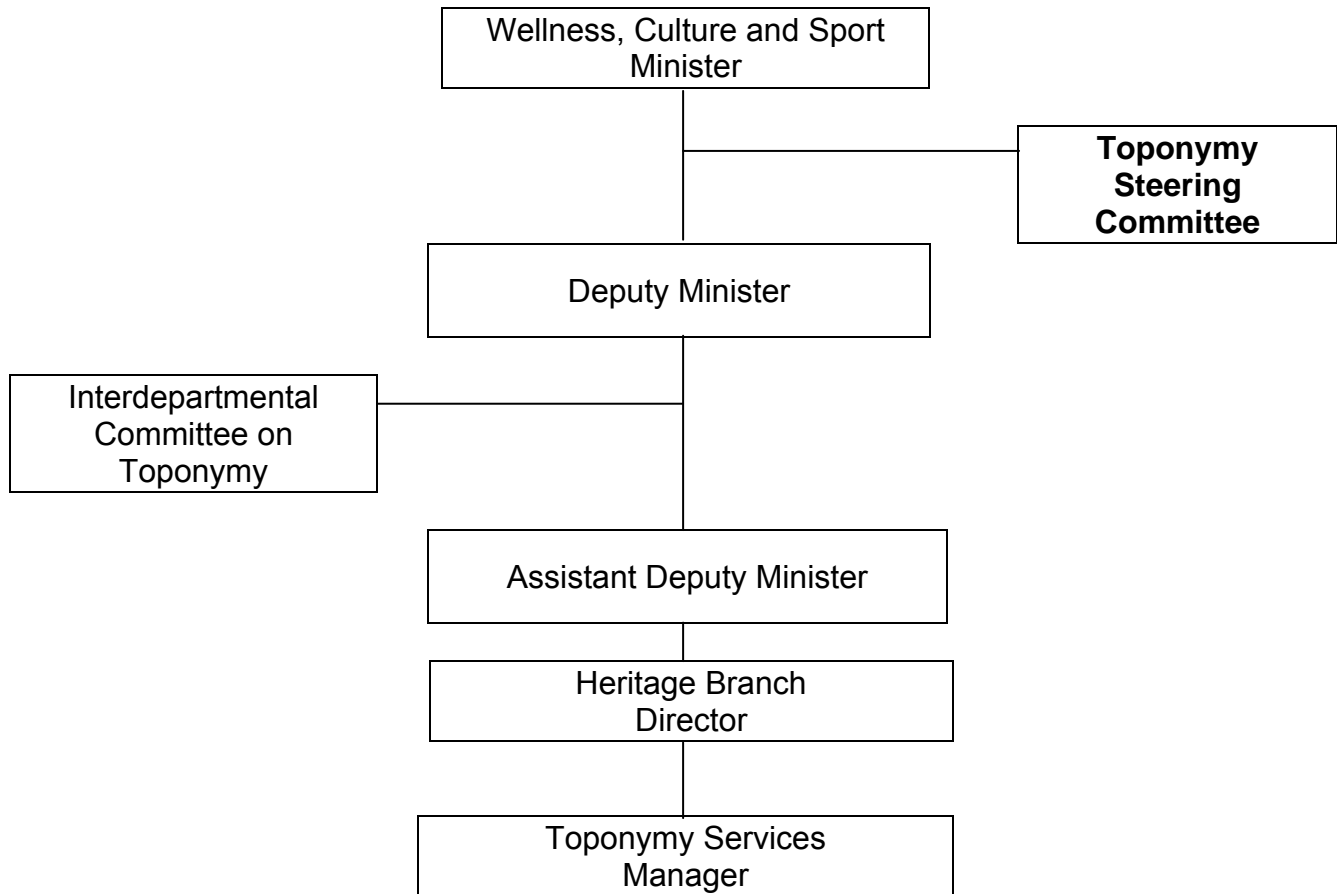
The Steering Committee is a public mechanism. Its composition is intended to reflect the province's cultural diversity. Accordingly, the Anglophone, Aboriginal (Maliseet and Mi'kmaq), and Francophone communities are each represented by two members chosen for that purpose and for their knowledge of the province and their expertise in history, linguistics, or other fields related to toponymy.

The Committee reports to the Minister of Wellness, Culture and Sport, who is the provincial authority in toponymic matters. The Toponymy Services manager is the only permanent employee assigned to toponymy. He is responsible for administering toponymy-related activities, ensuring coordination and liaison between the various entities and representing the province on the Geographical Names Board of Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> Owing to an extended leave of absence of Gilles Bourque, Andrée C. Godin was appointed acting manager. She was in turn replaced during the year by another acting manager, Lise Rachelle Robichaud, until the incumbent's gradual, then full-time return to work.

## ■ Organization chart



## ■ Mandate

The New Brunswick Toponymy Steering Committee is responsible for examining requests pertaining to the new naming or name changes of existing places and geographic features (such as rivers, lakes, mountains, marshes, islands, etc.) and for making recommendations to the Minister responsible for toponymy.

### **Roles and responsibilities:**

- Evaluate information and participate in research on topics concerning new names or proposed name changes for places and geographic features in the province;
- Comply with the statutes and regulations currently in force in New Brunswick;
- Recommend policies for future orientation relating to toponymic matters in New Brunswick;
- Advise and make recommendations to the Minister concerning the names of places and geographic features, as well as the appropriateness or spelling of toponyms;

- Develop toponymy awareness tools;
- Gather comments from the public on toponymic matters when necessary and disseminate the official toponyms of New Brunswick;
- Advise New Brunswick's official representative on the Geographical Names Board of Canada;
- Give advice as requested to the departments with naming authority (bridges, roads, municipalities, local service districts, protected areas, etc.); and
- Prepare an annual report.

## Part 2 - Main Activities

### ■ Highlights

#### • Meetings

The Steering Committee met four times during the period in question, all in Fredericton, and the members took advantage of simultaneous translation services.

#### • Requests handled

The Steering Committee examined three new requests, one of which led to a changed geographical feature name<sup>2</sup>. On an ongoing basis, it continued to follow the evolution of seven cases that are still active, one of which led to the adoption of a new name<sup>3</sup>. The Steering Committee was also called upon to study an issue and state its opinion on a matter submitted by the Commissioner of Official Languages.

#### • Research

Two research projects were conducted on behalf of the Toponymy Steering Committee. The first involved a group of five (5) names for which the Committee needed to know more about the historical background of the proposed names. This research enabled the Committee, on the one hand, to make a recommendation<sup>4</sup> to close a file<sup>5</sup> and, on the other hand, to continue working toward a solution to the original requests.

The second study dealt with a toponymy-related issue raised by the Commissioner of Official Languages. The research was undertaken and the results will enable the Steering Committee to provide the requested clarifications in the near future.

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<sup>2</sup> The Maliseet name (toponym) *Eqpahak* is replacing the current toponym *Savage Island*.

<sup>3</sup> The name *île de Caraquet* is replacing the toponym *Caraquet Island*.

<sup>4</sup> Recommended the French name *Île de Caraquet* to replace *Caraquet Island*.

<sup>5</sup> This refers to the *Maltampec* case.

- Presentations

During their meetings, two presentations were given to the members of the Steering Committee. The first gave a general outline of the relationship between toponymy and the Department of Transportation<sup>6</sup>. It touched on aspects such as information sources for community names on road signs – one of the department's major responsibilities – regulations dictating the installation of signs, abbreviations used and the predominance of English. The presentation also addressed how the implementation of the 911 system has impacted the identification of communities.

The second presentation helped familiarize members with *GeoNB*, an electronic tool<sup>7</sup> designed to promote and increase the use of geographical information and maps. It contains information from several different databases and, according to the presenter<sup>8</sup>, highlights the need to pay more attention to official names and standardize those names.

- Model/template – public consultations

The Steering Committee collaborated with Toponymy Services, which undertook to consult households in the community of *Butte d'Or* following the actions of a number of residents and others concerned about re-establishing road signs, and in turn, the re-establishment of the place name. It disappeared when the 911 system was implemented and was replaced by *Saint-Sauveur*. To do this, the Steering Committee amended and simplified the relevant documentation from the Department of Public Safety. At the writing of this report, the consultation process is about to begin. The results will enable the Steering Committee to refine the toponymic process. It plans to use this measure in several other cases that are still on hold.

- Adoption of formats – recommendations and guidelines

The Steering Committee adopted a standard format for writing and submitting its recommendations to the Minister in both official languages. This format was agreed to when the very first recommendations were submitted at the end of the 2008-09 year.

The Committee likewise adopted a standard format for writing and presenting guidelines, and over the course of the year, adapted the guidelines developed the previous year.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Rino Beaulieu, Engineer, Department of Transportation, Regular meeting of January 31, 2009

<sup>7</sup> GeoNB was launched on November 18, 2009

<sup>8</sup> Dave Finley, presentation of GeoNB during the regular meeting of November 21, 2009

<sup>9</sup> Toponymy Steering Committee, Regular meeting of April 4, 2009

- First Aboriginal toponym

The Steering Committee had the opportunity to look into the case of two requests to give geographic features Aboriginal names. One of these requests led to the first official changing of a current toponym (*Savage Island*) to a Maliseet name *Eqpahak*<sup>10</sup>. The other case received a recommendation to adopt the change in principle while waiting for a verification to confirm and obtain assent for the proposed name.

- Renewed terms

Three members<sup>11</sup> of the Steering Committee whose terms were ending during the period in question agreed to renew them, this time for three years.

- Work plan review

At the beginning of its first mandate, the Steering Committee had outlined a work plan, on the basis of the roles and responsibilities assigned to it, consisting of eight items, which it placed in order of priority. This work plan was revised and updated in the fall of 2009. Thus, in view of the experience of the past year, a few priorities have emerged: improving internal communications within government with respect to toponymy-related issues; fine-tuning the approval process (name changes and new names); developing a public consultation process; increasing the Committee's visibility and improving the website; the issue of Aboriginal names; clarifying the Committee's role in initiating activities.

- Manager's extended leave of absence

The Toponymy Services manager's absence extended to a major portion of the period in question. This absence was felt all the more when the acting manager herself was replaced by someone else until the manager's gradual return to full-time work. Nevertheless, credit must be given to the Heritage Branch, which spared no efforts to fill the void and firmly support the work of the Steering Committee. For that reason, several cases, particularly the request leading to the adoption of the name *Eqpahak*, continued to move forward.

- Priority given to Acadian Peninsula requests

The Steering Committee continued to give special attention to toponymic concerns and naming requests received from the Acadian Peninsula, since the World Acadian Congress was held in that region during the summer of 2009.

## ■ Findings

As in the first report, this part sets out the Toponymy Steering Committee's achievements in relation to the anticipated results, presented here in bold. The Committee understands that although some of the results are short-term in nature or measured on an annual basis, the real impact of its work will become apparent in the long term.

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<sup>10</sup> The word *Eqpahak* means "where the tide stops rising."

<sup>11</sup> Matthieu LeBlanc, Elizabeth McGahan and Marjorie Polchies.

### ***Evaluate requests for name changes or establishment of new names***

In comparison with its first year of operation, the Steering Committee examined three new requests, one of which led to a name change for a geographical feature.<sup>12</sup> Otherwise, efforts continued with a view to settling several cases from the list dating back to before the Steering Committee was established, as well as what came to be known as the “Acadian Peninsula series” – a group of 16 requests all submitted at once, in the fall of 2008. Three of the cases<sup>13</sup> in that series are part of the Committee’s active cases. Among those, the *Blanchard Settlement* case was given particular attention because the name that was proposed and recommended by the Steering Committee raised an objection from the Department of Local Government. At the writing of this report, this situation is in the process of being resolved. Likewise, the Steering Committee focused on the *Butte d’Or* case when it got involved in the public consultation process with respect to the community’s signage.

The Steering Committee was also called upon to study and state its opinion on a case submitted by the Commissioner of Official Languages, dealing with the degree of implementation by the government of what seemed to be a decision to officially recognize the practice of using *Saint John* or *Saint-Jean* in texts.

### ***Make recommendations concerning the cases examined***

The Steering Committee made two recommendations to the Minister responsible regarding the names of the geographic features *île de Caraquet* and *Eqpahak*, which have already been mentioned in this report.

The interdepartmental discussions following the objection to the name proposed to francize the toponym *Blanchard Settlement* provided the Steering Committee with an opportunity to point out to the Minister the need to strengthen the lines of communication within government and the vital role the Steering Committee can play in toponymy-related issues. In this vein, it recommended that all toponymy-related issues be sent to the Steering Committee.

### ***Collaborate on the establishment of standards and guidelines***

The examination of the cases submitted to the Steering Committee this year did not lend itself to the formulation of standards or guidelines. However, the suggestion of a pronunciation key during the discussion about the adoption of Aboriginal names could potentially lead to developing something along those lines. We can report that the guidelines developed last year were standardized to match a presentation format adopted this year.

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<sup>12</sup> The name *Eqpahak* is replacing *Savage Island* to identify an island in the Saint John River.

<sup>13</sup> This refers to the name of the communities of *Miscou Lighthouse*, *Pigeon Hill* and *Savoy Landing*.

### ***Implement a process for holding public meetings or forums***

The Steering Committee made use of the public consultation process developed by the Department of Public Safety, i.e. a sample letter and a consultation form, to apply in the case of the community of *Butte d'Or* to which it added an information sheet. The consultation process being prepared should therefore enable the Steering Committee to consider its effectiveness and adjust it as needed. Moreover, it foresees using this type of process in several of the cases that are still active. It is expected that this approach could be accompanied by public meetings with the logistics yet to be determined.

### ***Identify problems relating to toponymy***

Two cases examined this year provided an opportunity to highlight a few toponymy-related issues connected with the civic status of communities.

The *Blanchard Settlement* case, in addition to pointing out the need for better interdepartmental communication and the role of the Steering Committee, raised the issue of the process relating to name changes in the case of Local Service Districts (LSDs). Furthermore, the francization of the term *settlement* could become more difficult in the future. The amendments to the regulations under the *Municipalities Act* in July 2009, through which the terms "town" and "village" were removed from the names of eight municipalities, will make it more difficult to translate or provide a French adaptation of this term (*settlement*), which is found in a number of now predominantly Francophone communities in the province.

In the case of *Butte d'Or*, the issue of multiple levels of identification was raised. The case is perhaps even more meaningful with respect to communities as defined in the Emergency 911 Act – and whose designation aims to meet identification needs in cases of emergency. This designation has led, in many instances, to lost local identity as well as a disappearance of road signage.

### ***Examine and propose possible toponymic initiatives to be undertaken***

The Steering Committee will be called on to continue the work begun with regard to public consultations. It will be able to count on the results of the anticipated exercise for the *Butte d'Or* case to fine-tune the process and the steps inherent in this type of activity.

The matter of multiple levels of identification that was raised should also be addressed in the future.

Related in part to the above concerns, the recommendations of the Finn report on local governance submitted in 2008<sup>14</sup> could lead to an examination of issues relating to names of administrative bodies.

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<sup>14</sup> Jean-Guy Finn, *Building Stronger Local Governments and Regions: An Action Plan for the Future of Local Governance in New Brunswick*, report tabled on December 18, 2008.

## ■ Participation

- The Steering Committee's chairperson represented New Brunswick at the Geographical Names Board of Canada's annual meeting, held in Iqaluit, on August 6 and 7, 2009, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the creation of Nunavut. The meeting provided an opportunity to examine a number of issues relating to cultural generics and Aboriginal names. The chairperson extended an official invitation to the members of the Board to attend the next annual meeting in Moncton, in October 2010.
- The manager participated as an observer and as a representative of the Steering Committee, at the annual general meeting of the Conseil pour l'aménagement du français au Nouveau-Brunswick, held in Moncton on November 13, 2009.

## ■ Part 3 – Changes

In this third part of the report, the Steering Committee will present the changes to the toponymic landscape that have taken place in the province since its formation. The recommendations made by the Toponymy Steering Committee during the 2008-09 year were approved by the Minister responsible after the end of the Steering Committee's first year of operation and are therefore included in this report.

It should be noted that all of the changes indicated below have been communicated to the Geographical Names Board of Canada, and the Canadian Geographical Names Data Base (CGNDB) has been modified accordingly.

### • Section A – Names before 2008

Of the seven (7) cases dating from before the Steering Committee was established, three entities have had their name francized:

*Petite rivière aux Ormes* has replaced *Little Elmtree River*.

*Rivière aux Ormes* has replaced *Elmtree River*.

*Rivière aux Ormes Sud* has replaced *South Branch Elmtree River*.

- a name was given to a geographic feature:

*Bailey's Chasm*

- and the name attributed to a watercourse was officialized:

*Little South Branch Kennebecasis River*

• **Section B – Names submitted in 2008-09 and modified in 2009-10**

The following changes come under the “Acadian Peninsula series”: a group of toponyms, most of which involved requests for francization:

*Île de Caraque* has replaced *Caraquet Island*.

*Évangéline* has replaced *Evangeline*.

*Petit-Shippagan* has replaced *Little Shippegan*.

*Île Miscou* has replaced *Miscou Island*.

*Grande Plaine* has replaced *Miscou Plains*.

*Île Pokesudie* has replaced *Pokesudie Island*.

*Portage de Shippagan* has replaced *Shippegan Portage*.

*Rivière-à-la-Truite* has replaced *Trout Stream*.

• **Section C – Name submitted and modified in 2009-10**

Of the three cases examined by the Steering Committee during the current year, only one recommendation was formulated and received the approval of the Minister:

*Eqpahak* has replaced *Savage Island*.

• **Section D – Other name changes**

This section includes the changes made following the amendments to the regulation under the *Municipalities Act* on July 27, 2009. This amendment involved the removal of the terms “town of” and “village of” from the names of several municipalities and a few typographical corrections:

*Baker-Brook* has replaced “Town of Baker Brook.”

*Cap-Pelé* has replaced “Village de Cap-Pele.”

*Drummond* has replaced “Village of Drummond.”

*Grand-Sault* and *Grand Falls* have replaced “Ville de Grand-Sault” and “Town of Grand Falls.”

*Petit-Rocher* has replaced “Village of Petit Rocher.”

*Saint-Léonard* has replaced “Town of St. Leonard.”

*Shippagan* has replaced “Town of Shippagan.”

The Steering Committee was very happy about these changes. Even though they are not a result of its direct involvement, the Steering Committee’s presence certainly played a role in helping bring about the above changes.

## ■ Conclusion

At the close of this second year of operation, of which this report gives an account, a few points are worth highlighting.

First of all, the Steering Committee was somewhat surprised by the low number of new naming or name change requests, particularly in view of the expectations created by the World Acadian Congress that was held on the Acadian Peninsula and the francization efforts that had preceded it.

However, this observation is of less concern when the list of changes that have been made since the formation of the Toponymy Steering Committee is reviewed. Like the questions and concerns it is beginning to update, the changes to the nomenclature testify to the positive effect the Committee is having.

Another important point to stress is that the past year has been marked by what could be qualified as two firsts. In one instance, the Steering Committee was asked to study and recommend the adoption of an Aboriginal name, in the case of *Eqpahak* Island. In doing so, it was addressing one of the problems already mentioned in the first report, that of the recognition and presence of Aboriginal names throughout the province. In what could be considered another first, a public consultation, in the *Butte d'Or* case, allowed for the use of new tools. Expecting positive results, the Committee is more confident about moving several other similar cases forward in the near future.

The Toponymy Steering Committee therefore continues to take its rightful place in handling toponymic cases and responding to the expectations set out for it by the government authorities and the public.

In closing, we are already looking forward to the next year, which we believe will be an exciting time for the Toponymy Steering Committee and for all those who are interested in toponymy-related issues. New Brunswick will be hosting the 2010 Geographical Names Board of Canada's annual meeting in Moncton, in October. The Steering Committee will not miss this event.