

NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



TITLE: PARK NAMES POLICY

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<i>DATE OF ORIGINAL ENDORSMENT:</i>	Aug 2002
<i>DATE of EFFECT:</i>	Aug 2002
<i>DATE LAST MODIFIED:</i>	March 2003
<i>DATE for REVIEW:</i>	June 2005
<i>POLICY REFERENCE NO.</i>	FMopa-006de02/SP
<i>File No.:</i>	TRIM 02/06001

Park Names Policy

Introduction

Geographical names

Geographical names are an important part of the heritage of NSW. They reflect the history of an area, often including indigenous culture, European explorers, early settlers, local entities and successive landuses, as well as descriptions of the landscape. Local communities, including Aboriginal people, often have a strong affinity with geographical names.

Park names

The first national park in NSW, established in 1879, was called simply The National Park. After the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to Sydney in 1954, it was renamed Royal National Park in her honour.

In 1828 the NSW Surveyor-General, Thomas Mitchell, established guidelines for naming places that gave preference to Aboriginal names. This precedent has been followed in naming parks such that by 30 June 2001, 65% of all national parks in NSW had Aboriginal names.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 provides for the Governor to name (or alter the name of) national parks, historic sites, nature reserves, State game reserves and karst conservation areas. It further provides for the Minister to name (or alter the name of) State recreation areas and regional parks. The Act prohibits the use of the term *national park* and *state recreation area* except for lands reserved under the Act.

There is no legislative basis for the naming of NPWS-managed Crown reserves under the Crown Lands Act 1989 but through an administrative arrangement with the Geographical Names Board (GNB), the National Parks and Wildlife Reserve Trust is able to name or rename those Crown reserves it manages.

The vast majority of NPWS parks have either Aboriginal or European names of landscape features. However, names have also come from a variety of other sources eg donors (Cecil Hoskins) or the developments of donors (Windsor Downs), park trustee (Morton), forester (Dalrymple-Hay), naturalist (John Gould), and explorer (Charles Sturt). Some are named after the closest town or suburb (Tingira Heights), parish (Freemantle) or local Council (Eurobodalla).

The NSW Government is committed to recognising Aboriginal culture. One way this can be achieved is by re-instating the original place names to sit, side-by-side, with European names. Dual naming of landscape features represents a meaningful contribution to the process of reconciliation in NSW.

Nothing in this policy affects the renaming of Aboriginal ownership parks under Section 71U of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (the Act).

Geographical Names Board

The Geographical Names Board (GNB) was established by the Geographical Names Act 1966, to assign names to places and geographical features and to alter or discontinue geographical names.

The Secretary to the Geographical Names Board is located at the Land & Property Information NSW (LPI) Bathurst, where staff research naming proposals for the Board's consideration. The Board plays a strategic role in ensuring a high standard of spelling and authority for names in the State's information products.

All naming proposals are advertised in the Gazette and the local press inviting public comment, for which a period of one month is allowed.

All geographical names, including the names of parks, are recorded in the Geographical Names Register. Discontinued names are retained in the Register, which is an important reference for cartographers, researchers, publishers, government authorities and the public.

Objectives

The process of naming or renaming a park conforms to NSW and Australian standards and procedures for assigning or amending geographical names.

The name of a park reflects the natural features and/or cultural heritage of the place.

Recognition of our heritage of Aboriginal names for landscape features.

As far as possible, names are unique and avoid confusion with other parks, public lands or management authorities.

Park names are accepted in the community.

Scope / Application

This policy applies to all NPWS parks.

Policy

Naming new parks

1. A name shall not be ascribed to a park, except in accordance with this policy.
2. The name of a prominent natural (geographic) feature in the landscape is the preferred source for naming all parks, except historic sites and Aboriginal areas (see 12 and 13).
3. The use of names of natural features that are not within or extend well beyond the park will be avoided. These may lack precision in describing the location of the park (eg the Murray River, Great Dividing Range or Tasman Sea).
4. Preference will be given to using the local Aboriginal name of the prominent natural feature.
5. If it is proposed to use an Aboriginal name that is not a GNB-registered geographical name, the Park Authority will consult with appropriate

Aboriginal people, usually traditional owners or Elders groups, in choosing a name. No Aboriginal name, other than a GNB-registered geographic name, will be adopted without their consent.

6. If no appropriate Aboriginal name is available, or if local Aboriginal communities are unable to recommend an agreed and appropriate Aboriginal name for the prominent feature, the GNB-registered (non-Aboriginal) name of the feature will be used.
7. Where there is no prominent natural feature, or where it is inappropriate to use it in naming the park, the Park Authority will, after consultation with and the consent of appropriate Aboriginal people, give preference to using an agreed Aboriginal name of:
 - any natural feature, regardless of prominence, which holds some association with the area; or
 - a plant or animal which features in the park; or
 - other Aboriginal associations with the area (including the name of the traditional Aboriginal people).
8. Whenever an Aboriginal name or word is used, it will be used without associated European words (eg without Mount, River, Range).
9. A park may also be named in posthumous commemoration of an eminent explorer, natural scientist or conservationist specifically associated with the park or its locality, or a prominent Aboriginal leader or person (e.g. Pemulwuy, Bennelong/Baneelon) known from the park's locality.
10. Parks will not be named after donors, benefactors, sponsors, politicians, public figures or other people, living or dead, other than in accordance with paragraph 12.
11. Parks can be dual named (ie a hyphenated combination of two or more European and Aboriginal names) in accordance with this policy – see Dual Naming section below.

Historic sites

12. Historic sites will be named after the place, event, person or persons they commemorate.

Aboriginal areas

13. Aboriginal areas will be given an Aboriginal name after consultation with, and the consent of, appropriate Aboriginal people.

Crown reserves and State conservation areas

14. Where it is anticipated that a Crown reserve or State conservation area (SCA) will be added to an existing NPWS park, it shall be given the same name as the park (eg “Yuraygir National Park” and “Yuraygir Reserve” or “Yuragir SCA”). Where the park and Crown reserve / SCA are cited together it will be in the form “Yuraygir National Park and Reserve” or “Yuragir National Park and SCA”. This will assist in any future amalgamation of the lands and associated need to discontinue the name of the Crown reserve or SCA.

15. Where a Crown reserve or State conservation area is proposed as a separate park, it will be named in accordance with this policy as if it were a park.
16. The word 'Crown' shall not be used as part of the name (ie "Tumblong Reserve" not "Tumblong Crown Reserve").

Renaming existing parks

17. Under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, the Governor (s 36) or the Minister (s 47F and 74P) may alter the name of a park by proclamation published in the Gazette.
18. A park shall not be renamed except in accordance with this policy.
19. The renaming of a park will be considered where:
 - The current name is not in accordance with this policy;
 - The spelling of the name is incorrect;
 - A non-Aboriginal name is currently used and a new Aboriginal name is proposed;
 - A wrong or inappropriate Aboriginal name has been used;
 - A local Aboriginal name is identified for the natural feature for which the park is named (ie where the Aboriginal name for that feature had not previously been formally identified or recorded);
 - The expansion of the park incorporates a more appropriate prominent natural feature;
 - It is proposed to amalgamate two or more adjacent parks (ie apply an existing park name to an adjoining park and discontinue use of name of the park subsumed); or
 - It proposed to rename the park in accordance with paragraph 9.

Review of park names

20. The NPWS will undertake a review of non-Aboriginal names for existing parks, excluding historic sites, to identify candidate parks for possible renaming (new Aboriginal names or dual naming). The review will adopt a staged approach and utilise opportunities to consider renaming as they arise.

Dual names

21. The NPWS will consider a dual name for a park (rather than replacing the existing name with an Aboriginal name) where the park currently has a non-Aboriginal name and:
 - The current non-Aboriginal name is long-standing and is widely known in the community, and should therefore be retained as part of the park name; or
 - The current non-Aboriginal name of the park or place is of historic or other cultural significance, and should therefore be retained as part of the park name.

22. Under the National Parks and Wildlife Act (s 36), the Governor may assign a name to a park by proclamation published in the Gazette. By inference, this means that parks may only be assigned one name. Dual names (ie hyphenated or joint names) are deemed to be one name. Separate Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal names (or other forms of multiple names) for a park are not provided for under the Act. For example,
The following names are acceptable:
“Botany Bay National Park”, or
“Kamay National Park”; or
“Botany Bay – Kamay National Park”; or
“Kamay – Botany Bay National Park”; or
“Kamay Botany Bay National Park”; or
“Botany Bay Kamay National Park”.
It is not possible to use multiple or alternate names such as:
“Kamay National Park / Botany Bay National Park”.
23. The order and structure of dual names should be guided by
(a) an overall preference for using the Aboriginal name as the first part of the dual name; and
(b) community preferences, as well as stylistic, design and aesthetic considerations.
Note that in all NPWS signage and publications the Aboriginal name will appear in the same font type, font style and font size as all other components of a park name. While recognising a cartographic convention to italicise indigenous names within a dual name, the Aboriginal component of a dual name will not be italicised.
24. The GNB Dual Naming Policy applies only to geographical features (eg rivers, lakes and mountains) in NSW and not parks or other post-1770 cadastral constructs. However, the process initiated by the GNB may lead to Aboriginal names being identified for the natural feature after which a park is named. Where such a dual name is registered by the GNB, the Park Authority will assess whether the park should be renamed in line with the new dual name of the relevant geographical feature. However, a GNB registration of a dual name for a geographical feature does not automatically require that the park be renamed with either an Aboriginal or dual name.

General considerations

25. A compound or hyphenated name (other than a dual name) will not be used unless it is a GNB-registered geographical name, an Aboriginal name or the name of a person.
26. The NPWS will not use names that might sound offensive in a community language.
27. In choosing a name, the NPWS will avoid using the name of nearby towns, suburbs, local council areas, state forests or other reserves (including names used for reserves in adjacent States or Territories) unless the word is also the name of a geographic feature, an appropriate Aboriginal word or of historic significance.

28. To avoid confusion, place names that are common in a number of regions will not be used (eg Deep Creek, Bald Hill).

Naming or renaming geographical features

29. The NPWS and NPWS employees can, like any other organisation or individual in NSW, prepare a submission to the GNB which proposes the recognition of a name, or alteration of a name, for a geographical feature.
30. A submission must follow standard procedures as provided for under the Geographical Names Act. For all necessary documents, such as naming proposal forms, see the GNB website at www.lpi.nsw.gov.au/geog

Procedural Guidelines

Naming new parks

31. The Park Authority is responsible for sourcing and recommending a name for a new park.
32. The Park Authority, or his/her nominee, is responsible for liaising with appropriate Aboriginal people, local Councils and others as required.
33. Before adopting a name, other than a GNB-registered geographical name, the Park Authority will undertake such research and inquiry as is necessary to establish the validity of the name. The Geographical Names Register can be searched on-line at the GNB website.
34. The Park Authority will seek the advice of the relevant Regional Advisory Committee(s) regarding the appropriateness of proposed names.
35. The Park Authority will prepare a naming citation for each proposal. The citation will identify the origin of the name, its relevance to the park, the meaning of the name (if known and not self-evident), the recommended spelling and pronunciation, information sources and/or people consulted.
36. In the case of Aboriginal names, the citation will include the consent of the appropriate Aboriginal people to the use of the name. In preparing the citation the Park Authority will liaise with the Director, Cultural Heritage Directorate.
37. The Park Authority will obtain such linguistic advice as may be necessary to establish an appropriate name.
38. Spelling of Aboriginal names will be in accordance with the Committee for Geographical Names in Australia *Policy Guidelines for the Recording and Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Names* (1992).
39. The Park Authority will submit the naming citation, together with any comments or recommendations of the relevant Regional Advisory Committee(s), to the Manager, Conservation Management Unit (CMU) within the NPWS Landscape Conservation Division.

40. The Manager, CMU will, as appropriate, accumulate and file all relevant documentation relating to a naming proposal, including the naming citation, and will prepare Gazettal descriptions and diagrams and Executive Council Minutes for park name changes.
41. If the Regional Advisory Committee and local Aboriginal communities are not in general agreement regarding a park name proposal, or the matter is particularly complex or contentious, the Manager, CMU will refer matter to:
 - (a) the Director, Policy and Science for information;
 - (b) the Aboriginal Advisory Council for consideration and advice (if the matter presents Aboriginal cultural heritage or language issues) ;
 - (c).the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council for consideration and advice; and, if resolved
 - (d) proceed as per 42.
42. If the Regional Advisory Committee and local Aboriginal communities are in general agreement regarding a park name proposal, or if the matter has been resolved through referral to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee and/or the Advisory Council, the Manager, CMU will forward naming proposal to:
 - (a) the Director, Policy and Science for endorsement;
 - (b) the Secretary of the GNB for concurrence;
 - (c).the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council for information; and
 - (d) the Minister for approval
43. For the purpose of registration as a park name, the GNB has delegated to the Secretary the power to concur with the proposal if it complies with the Board's naming guidelines. If the proposal does not satisfy the Board's guidelines, the proposal would be submitted to the next Board meeting for consideration. The Secretary to the GNB has indicated that, unless the matter requires referral to the Board, proposals will be considered, and a concurrence decision made, within one week. See also the 'Geographical Names Act' section below
44. Publication of a park name in the Gazette should not occur until written notice of GNB concurrence has been received from the GNB Secretary. See also 'Geographical Names Board Concurrence' section below.
45. The Manager CMU will, upon publication in the Gazette, advise all NPWS Directors, the relevant Conservation Programs and Planning Division (CPPD) Manager, and Regional Manager specifically responsible for the park, of the formal adoption of the park name. As a courtesy, the Manager, CMU will also advise the relevant local government authority(ies) of the name or name change.

Renaming existing parks

46. Processes for renaming follow the same accountabilities and actions as detailed in the 'Naming New Parks' section above, except that **all** renaming proposals must be referred to the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council for consideration and advice, prior to undertaking the actions outlined at paragraph 42.
47. The renaming a park (or part of a park) by adopting the name of the adjoining park for the purpose of amalgamation is exempted from

paragraph 46. In the event of an amalgamation, a concurrent review of the park name should, however, also be considered.

Discontinued names

48. If the renaming of a park is proposed as part of an amalgamation, and the amalgamation will result in the discontinuance of an existing park name, the Park Authority will:
 - (a) assess the extent to which local Aboriginal communities support or oppose the proposal, particularly where it is an Aboriginal name which is to be discontinued; and
 - (b) assess the extent to which the broader community supports or opposes the proposal.

Note that there may be varying and opposing views or sensitivities within the community in response to a proposal to discontinue a park name. The decision to discontinue a park name should be based on a balanced consideration of all views and should also consider related matters such as the extent to which the name will persist in the landscape (ie the park name may change but a geographical feature or town name of the same name may provide a continued recognition of the word).

Notification of discontinued names

49. Sections 36, 47F and 74P of the National Parks and Wildlife Act provide for the Governor or Minister to alter the name of a park by proclamation published in the Gazette. There is no legislative requirement for a separate notification of the discontinuance of a name. The publication of details relating to the alteration of a park name, including reference to the old and new names, is considered sufficient.
50. It is, however, important that all park name changes are recorded in the Geographical Names Register. Manager, CMU shall submit the details of discontinued park names to the GNB for registration.
51. Manager, CMU shall also advise all NPWS Directors, the relevant Conservation Programs and Planning Division (CPPD) Manager, and the Regional Manager specifically responsible for the park, of the formal discontinuance of the park name.

Changing park signs, data records and publications

52. All Directors, when notified of a park name change, must ensure that all persons within their Directorate who are responsible for park name data, signs, or promotional and educational material that may make reference to the park in question, take action to:
 - . Update records/data/signs/publications to reflect the new name; and
 - . Includes, where appropriate, an explanation of the park name.
53. Note that changes to signs, data and publications should not be initiated until the name of the park has been Gazetted.
54. The data records of the Geographical Names Register also need to be updated. Manager, CMU will forward a copy of the Gazette notice to

the Secretary of the GNB immediately after the park naming/renaming notice is published in the Gazette.

Acknowledging indigenous country

55. Details of the indigenous country/ies that pertain to lands within the boundaries of the park should also be included in signs, data, interpretive installations and publications. The naming or renaming of a park will serve as an opportunity to include these details but actions to include details of indigenous country/ies can and should be initiated by the Park Authority independently of name changes.

Geographical Names Act

56. Section 12 of the Geographical Names Act 1966 deals with the powers conferred under other Acts (such as the National Parks and Wildlife Act) to name geographical features. Section 12(1) generally provides that any power to assign a name to a place or alter a name of a place cannot be exercised unless the Geographical Names Board (GNB) first concurs in the name or the alteration. An exception to that requirement occurs when parks listed in Schedule 14 to the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 are returned to the traditional Aboriginal owners. In those cases section 71U of the Act provides that section 12 of the Geographical Names Act does not apply.

Definitions

Acquired land means land acquired by the Minister under Part 11 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

Act means the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

Crown reserve means land reserved or dedicated under the *Crown Lands Act 1989* for the purpose of conservation which is under the care, control and management of the National Parks and Wildlife Reserve Trust, the Director-General or the Minister.

Director-General means the Director-General of National Parks and Wildlife.

Geographical name means the name of a place, which name has been notified in the Gazette as a geographical name, but does not include a name which has ceased to be a geographical name under this Act

Park means a national park, historic site, state recreation area, regional park, nature reserve, state game reserve, karst conservation reserve, Aboriginal area or Crown reserve managed by NPWS.

Park Authority has the same meaning as defined under the NPW regulation 2002 Schedule.

Place means any geographical or topographical feature or any district, division, locality, region, city, town, village, settlement, railway station or school or any other place within the territories and waters of the State of NSW but does not include any road, any local government area, urban area, county district or electoral district.

Relevant Legislation

National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974

The *National Parks & Wildlife Act 1974* provides that the Governor may name an area reserved or dedicated under the Act at the time the new area is gazetted or at any time afterwards. Section 36 applies to national parks and historic sites, 47F to state recreation areas, 47P to regional parks, 51 to nature reserves, 58C to state game reserves, 58L to karst conservation areas. There is no statutory provision for the naming of Aboriginal areas, Aboriginal places, protected archaeological areas, wilderness areas or wild and scenic rivers.

Geographical Names Act 1966

The responsibility for recording and approving geographical names in NSW lies with the Geographical Names Board (GNB) which is part of the Department of Information Technology and Management. The GNB, in co-operation with other national and international naming authorities, has established guidelines for naming places. Amongst other things the GNB seeks to eliminate duplication, standardise spelling and punctuation, recognise long established names, encourage the use of Aboriginal names, discourage using names of living persons and acknowledge the multicultural nature of our society.

Relevant Documents and Further Reading

NPWS

Cultural Heritage Community Consultation 2001
Cultural Heritage Information Policy 2001

Other Sources

[Geographical Names Board of NSW](#)

Guidelines for the Determination of Places Names

Dual Naming – Policy and draft guidelines

[Committee for Geographical Names in Australia](#)

Policy Guidelines for the Recording and Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names

Toponymic Guidelines for Australia

[Macquarie Aboriginal Words. Thieberger, N. & McGregor, W. \(eds\). The Macquarie Library, Sydney, 1994.](#)

Contacts

NPWS

Telephone numbers for listed contacts can be obtained through the NPWS switchboard (Telephone 02 9585 6444) or by consulting a NPWS internal telephone directory.

[Policy application and implementation](#)

Manager, Conservation Management Unit, LCD- submission to GNB

Manager, Cultural Heritage Division - citation

Cultural Heritage:

Manager, Cultural Heritage Policy & Programs Unit, CHD –cultural heritage policy

Manager, Conservation Assessment & Priorities Unit, LCD - negotiation history

Manager, Cultural Heritage Research Unit – cultural heritage research

Community relations and publicity

Senior Media Officer - press and publicity

Manager, Publication Services Unit, ECPD - publications

Policy review and development

Manager, Protected Areas Policy, SPD

Geographical Names Board

Secretariat (Bathurst)

Land and Property Information NSW

Telephone: (02) 6332 8214 www.lpi.nsw.gov.au/geog

ATTACHMENT A

Accountability Table

The NPWS position which has the predominant role for the implementation of this policy is:

Park Authority: Preferred delegation – Area Manager

Accountability statements for this position can be found at:

Item	Topic
31	Naming new parks
32	Naming new parks
33	Naming new parks
34	Naming new parks
35	Naming new parks
36	Naming new parks
37	Naming new parks
39	Naming new parks
46	Renaming existing parks
28	Discontinued names
55	Acknowledging indigenous country

Other positions:

**Manager, Conservation Management Unit (M,CMU)
Directors**

Accountability statements for these positions can be found at:

Item	Topic	Who
40	Naming new parks	M,CMU
41	Naming new parks	M,CMU
42	Naming new parks	M,CMU
45	Naming new parks	M,CMU
46	Renaming existing parks	M,CMU
50	Notification of discontinued names	M,CMU
52	Changing park signs, data ...	Directors
54	Changing park signs, data ...	M,CMU