

The following statement of policy guides the Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names (ACAN) of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (USBGN) in deciding individual cases. It should be helpful also to those persons proposing names for natural features in Antarctica.

The problem of geographic nomenclature in Antarctica differs from that of any land area of comparable size. Antarctica has no permanent settlements. Even in the stations continuously occupied for a number of years, the personnel are rotated. The continent has been visited and explored by the representatives of many nations, who, by their heroic efforts to broaden man's knowledge of this land of ice and snow, have fully demonstrated the international nature of the world of science. Most major features of Antarctica have been discovered and mapped, but a vast number of secondary features continue to be only partially delineated and remain unnamed.

Under the policy here set forth, decisions on Antarctic names are based on priority of application, appropriateness, and the extent to which usage has become established. The nationality of the honoree is not a factor in the consideration of personal names. The grouping of natural features into three orders of magnitude, with corresponding categories of persons according to the type of contribution which they have made, is intended to provide the greatest possible objectivity in determining the appropriateness of a name.

Because Antarctica has no history of permanent settlement, and because the continent has been unveiled through the efforts of explorers, scientists, and others, the Board has found it practical to apply the names of such persons to Antarctic natural features. The requirements for naming features, coupled with the availability of names of deserving people, further justify this practice. It does not, however, preclude the use of other than personal names. Nonpersonal names are discussed below.

The names of Antarctic buildings, facilities, stations and other installations, not being natural features, do not fall within the purview of the Board. Such names, though not included as main entries in the decision list, are significant in the overall nomenclature and do occur frequently in the text of decisions.

Types of natural features

The kinds of features that have been named in Antarctica are roughly grouped in three categories. There is considerable latitude for judgment in classifying individual features, since it is practically impossible to set size limits for "large glaciers," "great mountains," or "large bays."

Features having special significance or prominence in geographic discovery, scientific investigation, or the history of Antarctica may be placed in the next higher category than their size would warrant.

1. First-order features

- a. Regions or "lands"
- b. Coasts
- c. Seas
- d. Plateaus
- e. Extensive mountain ranges
- f. Major subglacial basins, mountains, or plateaus
- g. Ice shelves
- h. Large glaciers

2. Second-order features

- a. Peninsulas
- b. Mountain ranges, except the most extensive
- c. Great or prominent mountains
- d. Glaciers, except the largest
- e. Prominent capes
- f. Islands or ice rises
- g. Gulfs
- h. Large bays
- i. Straits or passages
- j. Harbors
- k. Extensive reefs, shoals, or banks

3. Third-order features

- a. Minor mountains and hills
- b. Nunataks
- c. Cliffs
- d. Rocks
- e. Minor shore features
- f. Points
- g. Capes (except the greater or more prominent ones)
- h. Glaciers (except the greater or more prominent ones)
- i. Bays (except the greater or more prominent ones)
- j. Coves
- k. Anchorages
- l. Parts of these features
- m. Reefs, shoals, and banks of small extent

Application of commemorative or personal names to features

Purpose:

This policy statement guides the Advisory Committee on Antarctic Names (ACAN) in selecting commemorative names to recommend to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names for formal recognition by the United States.

Background:

Geographic nomenclature in Antarctica is unique in the world for several reasons. There is no indigenous population and hence no history of cultural ties to geography, and human presence has a relatively short history and is, at many scales, temporary. There is also no sovereign territory and instead the region is managed under an international agreement, the Antarctic Treaty. Even permanent research stations are populated with temporary residents who are there for specific work assignments. Despite the short history, however, increasing numbers of people travel to Antarctica each year. The US Antarctic Program alone supports more than 3,000 deployments each year. Over the last 20 years, several countries have initiated national Antarctic programs of their own or increased the tempo of their existing programs such that the total number of participants for all national Antarctic programs is probably about 5,000, involving more than 25 countries. In addition, the emergence of eco-tourism has resulted in large numbers of people visiting Antarctica – more than 45,000 tourists visited Antarctica in the 2007-2008 season (a peak year) but the estimate for an average austral summer season is in excess of 30,000 visitors. Despite these unusual characteristics, application of names to geographic features is an inherently human need, deriving from our desire to make a landscape familiar so that our place-based activities can be conducted more efficiently. Antarctica is no exception and so there is a legitimate need for mechanisms to propose, review and approve names of geographic features. Mariners made early discoveries of some coastal areas of Antarctica in the 18th and 19th centuries, while conducting voyages of discovery or exploitation, such as sealing or whaling. The heroic era of exploration of the Antarctic interior began little more than a century ago with the expeditions of Scott, Shackleton, Amundsen, and others. Except for interruptions during the two World Wars, exploration activity has been an increasing enterprise. Following the International Geophysical Year in the late 1950's, Antarctic exploration took a significant leap forward with several nations taking a strong interest in the region. Geographic names were applied at all these stages of exploration and so feature naming remains an important activity today as we continue to expand our place-based activities.

Personal and descriptive names

Geographic names of features can be divided into two broad categories: names that honor people or organizations, and non-personal names that often are descriptive in nature or commemorate some prior

event. With regard to application of personal names, it is useful to consider the evolution of human activities in Antarctica as context for the current policy. In earlier phases of exploration, the physical and emotional challenges to humans working in Antarctica were quite substantial. Expeditions for discovery and scientific research would generally require that people be away from home without capabilities for personal communications for long periods of time – months at least, and often years. This was compounded by the hardships imposed by the harsh climate and the primitive expeditionary equipment and supplies. As such, merely participating successfully in these expeditions was often considered sufficient justification for the honor of having a geographic feature named for an individual. In contrast, modern expeditions have ready access to a wide array of communications technologies that fully facilitate both operational and personal communications. Modern equipment and supplies create work environments not unlike areas in the developed world. Transportation is vastly safer, quicker, and more comfortable. In summary, modern Antarctic work does not require the deprivations and hardships of the past. As a consequence, the honor of having a geographic feature named for individuals should now be based on some significant contribution that goes well beyond successful participation in some Antarctic-related enterprise.

Authority and place-naming procedures

It is possible, of course, for anyone anywhere to name any place anything. For a name to have practical value, though, it has to be in common use. Common use derives from toponymic validity, locational veracity, and cultural acceptance. For domestic names within the United States, to take an example, a cornerstone approach is The National Map, a collaboration among the U.S. Geological Survey and other Federal, State, local, and Tribal partners to deliver topographic information including place names. Uses of The National Map range from recreation to scientific analysis to emergency response. The U.S. domestic names database contains more than 2 million geographic names. Both The National Map and the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), the nation's official geographic names repository derive the authority for the use of official names from the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as no agency or product of the Federal government of the United States may make any unilateral decisions regarding geographic names or use geographic names unless made official by the U.S. Board. Collaboration in Antarctic place naming, by comparison, has no local representation, but plenty of national representation at the level of national place naming authorities. The SCAR Composite Gazetteer of Antarctica (commenced 1992) consists of 36,781 names (April 2012) that corresponds to 18,780 features. The national names committees of 22 countries, including the United States, submitted these names. Thus a resident of an Antarctic Treaty nation who wishes to suggest that an Antarctic feature be named officially must – for reasons of national recognition and affiliation – recommend adoption to his or her own national naming authority. The U.S. Antarctic gazetteer contained 14,094 place names in January 2012, having begun its compilations in 1943. ACAN has enjoyed free exchange of information and views with names committees in other nations almost from the beginning. Many of the place names in the U.S. Antarctic

gazetteer had their origin in other nations. The Antarctic Treaty came into force in 1961 and has guided international governance of the continent since that time. In accord with the principles of the Antarctic Treaty, participant nations continue to have the authority to adopt names for their use. But full coordination of naming activities is strongly encouraged, and can be facilitated through the activities organized through the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR), an organization of the International Council of Science. Collaboration among the individual naming bodies has been invaluable in resolving difficult nomenclature problems and reducing the number of conflicting names. While final authority for naming resides with each nation's national names authority, the member nations have agreed, in principle, to the established SCAR Guidelines and have been following them since 1996. The U.S. Board on Geographic Names is a Federal body created in 1890 and established in its present form by Public Law in 1947 to maintain uniform geographic name usage throughout the Federal Government. Sharing its responsibilities with the Secretary of the Interior, the Board promulgates official geographic feature names with locative attributes as well as principles, policies, and procedures governing the use of domestic names, foreign names, Antarctic names, and undersea feature names. The usefulness of standardizing (not regulating) geographic names has been proved time and again, and today more than 50 nations have some type of national names authority. The United Nations states that "the best method to achieve international standardization is through strong programs of national standardization." This resolution applies in principle to Antarctica even though adopted for individual areas of sovereignty. While Antarctic names have been approved through the process described here specifically for required use by U.S. Government agencies, their use by the Antarctic specialist and the public is highly recommended for the sake of accuracy and uniformity.

Policy:

This policy supersedes all prior policies for use of commemorative or personal names for Antarctic geographic features that have been used by ACAN and USBGN. ACAN may, at its discretion, revise this policy in accordance with policies and practices of the USBGN.

Geographic Context:

This policy applies to the Antarctic as defined by the Antarctic Treaty; generally all land areas south of 60 degrees South. ACAN will work with the Advisory Committee on Undersea Features (USA) for questions that relate to overlapping jurisdiction. Features have traditionally been grouped into three orders of magnitude: First-order features include regions, seas, extensive mountain ranges, major subglacial basins, etc.; Second-order features include peninsulas, prominent mountains or groups of mountains, glaciers and ice-free regions, etc.; and Third-order features include minor mountains or groups of mountains, glaciers and valleys, cliffs, nunataks, etc. For all practical purposes, all first-order features and most second-order features have been named, except perhaps for sub-glacial features that have recently or not yet been discovered. In the past, the availability of first and second-order features for naming

meant that persons of great distinction in Antarctic issues could be considered for these features, with third-order features being used for less distinguished contributors or expedition participants. With only third-order features generally available, the honor of a personal name even on minor features must be justified by some significant contribution that directly or indirectly advances knowledge about the Antarctic or contributes significantly in some other way to societal interests in the Antarctic.

Criteria for Naming:

Decisions on Antarctic names are based on the following criteria in order of importance:

- a) Appropriateness;
- b) Priority of Application;
- c) The extent to which the usage has become established.

Explanation of “Appropriateness.”

The meaning of “priority” and “established usage” in the criteria above are clear whereas the criterion of “appropriateness” is considerably complex and deserves some explanation. This criterion embodies many facets from the simple notion of avoiding vulgar or potentially offensive names to the specific justification for honoring individuals whose names might be considered for geographic features. Regarding the rationale for applying commemorative or personal names (or organizational names), the contribution of the individual (or organization) must be significant. Mere participation in a national program or some other Antarctic expedition or venture, even when someone has performed his or her job in a commendable manner, and possibly over a long period of time, is insufficient rationale for this honor. This may, in some cases, be a departure from past practice but is in line with the current needs for names and recognizes that human activities in Antarctica are well beyond the heroic era. A significant contribution is characterized by some particularly outstanding and noteworthy accomplishment that would not have been possible without the actions of the intended honoree. For example, pioneering a new kind of scientific activity in Antarctica could be significant, or sustained exemplary contributions over one’s career to advancing a scientific field or facilitating the advancement of science could be significant. Likewise, particularly noteworthy accomplishments related to Antarctic policy (national or international policy), or to education about the Antarctic could be significant. On the other hand, serving on the support staff for a certain number of expeditions, for example, would not generally be judged to be significant.

In considering the appropriateness criterion, ACAN will consider the following in order of importance for newly proposed names:

- a) Chronological priority of discovery, naming, or other relevant action;
- b) The significance of the contribution of the person or organization to knowledge of Antarctica;
- c) Actual association of the person, organization, or event, etc., with the feature;
- d) Association of the person, organization, event, etc., with other polar exploration that has a

connection to Antarctic science or policy;

e) The significance of the contribution of the person to relevant fields of knowledge or to education or policy issues related to Antarctica;

f) Extent to which support has contributed to the sustained advancement of knowledge of Antarctica or to the collection of valuable scientific data or samples in Antarctica;

g) Other factors (uniqueness of the proposed name, etc.) as described below.

Other Factors:

- a) It is advisable in future naming in Antarctica to apply the name of a person to only one feature. Hence application of a personal name will generally be considered when the person has concluded, or is well advanced in, his or her Antarctic career unless extraordinary circumstances warrant consideration at an earlier career phase.
- b) To avoid confusion, the names of persons having the same surname should be applied to no more than one feature of a kind. The use of given names along with surnames may be appropriate if the surname has already been used.
- c) The possibility of ambiguity or confusion with names already in use will be considered in deciding names. The duplication of names in use is undesirable. Due attention will be afforded to potential ambiguities or duplication associated with simple descriptive names to avoid confusion about features.
- d) Duplication in Antarctica of names well known in other parts of the world is undesirable even though qualified by adjectives such as "new," "south," and "little."
 - i. Names already in use will be considered in the light of:
 - a. Appropriateness, as outlined above;
 - b. Wideness of acceptance, as evidenced by extended use on maps and in literature. Usage considered sufficiently fixed and/or unanimous may be accepted as valid grounds for approval of a name that otherwise may not qualify.
- e) Self-nominations as well as nominations from family members or from individuals whose relationship to the nominee is principally based on close friendship will not be accepted.
- f) Vulgar or potentially offensive names will not be approved.

Application of commemorative or personal names to features

Personal or commemorative names generally are applied to natural features based on the type of contributions described below. Because known first and second-order features are already named, these guidelines apply to application of personal names to any feature. As noted above, any honoree must have made some outstanding and significant contribution but an attempt will be made to match the prominence of the feature with the magnitude of the significant contribution made.:

- a) Leaders or organizers of major scientific activities in Antarctica or leaders or organizers of research and educational programs;
 - b) Persons who have made discoveries of outstanding significance in Antarctica, or leaders of parties that have made such discoveries;
 - c) Persons who have done outstanding and seminal work in the utilization of data or samples for advancing knowledge and understanding of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean;
 - d) Persons who, through their work facilitating Antarctic research, have made outstanding contributions to scientific knowledge or to the techniques of Antarctic exploration;
 - e) Persons whose outstanding heroism, skill, spirit, or labor have made a signal contribution to the success of an expedition;
 - f) Persons or organizations who have made outstanding contributions in the planning, organization, outfitting, or operation of expeditions to Antarctica (including intellectual or materiel contributions) with the principal motivation being the furtherance of scientific knowledge;
 - g) Persons whose contributions to knowledge of the Arctic or to knowledge in their respective fields have either advanced our knowledge of Antarctica or have expanded the opportunities for polar research;
 - h) Persons who have made outstanding and seminal contributions to the training of polar researchers or to educational activities or policy development related to Antarctica;
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Application of nonpersonal names

Names in the following categories may be applied to a feature in any order of magnitude with which there is association. Examples of nonpersonal names are:

- a) Names that commemorate events (e.g., Charcot's Deliverance Point and Nordenskjöld's Hope Bay)
 - b) Names of ships from which discoveries have been made (e.g., Cape Grönland and Cape Norvegia)
 - c) Names of organizations that have sponsored, supported, or given scientific or financial assistance to Antarctic expeditions (e.g., Royal Society Range, Admiralty Mountains, Banzare Coast) or names of institutions of higher learning that have contributed to the training of polar explorers
 - d) Names peculiarly descriptive of the feature (e.g., Deception Island, Mount Tricorn, or Three Slice Nunatak); descriptive names not unique or particularly appropriate and for which there are likely to be duplicates are undesirable
 - e) Any other nonpersonal name that because of its acknowledged importance occupies a major role in Antarctic exploration or history (e.g., Mount Glossopteris)
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Criteria of appropriateness

1. Newly proposed names will be considered for first, second, or third order features in the light of their appropriateness, as evidenced by the following factors arranged in order of weight:

- a) Chronological priority of discovery, naming, or other relevant action
- b) Actual association of the person, ship, or organization, event, etc., with the feature
- c) Association of the person, ship, organization, event, etc., with other polar exploration
- d) Contribution of the person to the knowledge of Antarctica
- e) Association of the person, ship, organization, event, etc., with other polar exploration
- f) Contribution of the person to relevant fields of knowledge
- g) Extent to which financial or material contributions have contributed to the success of an expedition or to the collection of valuable scientific data
- h) Previous recognition through a geographic name in Antarctica
 - a. It is advisable in future naming in Antarctica to apply the name of one person to only one feature.
 - b. To avoid confusion, the names of persons having the same surname should be applied to no more than one feature of a kind.
- i) The possibility of ambiguity or confusion with names already in use:
 - a. The duplication of names in use is undesirable.
 - b. Since descriptive names are often ambiguous and easily duplicated, they should be avoided, unless a descriptive name is peculiarly appropriate.
 - c. The duplication in Antarctica of names well known in other parts of the world is undesirable even though qualified by adjectives such as "new," "south," and "little."

2. Names already in use will be considered in the light of:

- a) Appropriateness, as outlined above
- b) Wideness of acceptance, as evidenced by extended use on maps and in literature. Usage considered sufficiently fixed and/or unanimous may be accepted as valid grounds for approval of a name that otherwise would not qualify.

Fields of knowledge pertinent to Antarctica

The following is a list of fields of knowledge in which outstanding contributions may be considered justification for commemoration in an Antarctic place name. It is to be considered neither exclusive nor exhaustive, and no order of priority is intended.

- Navigation and astronomy
- Oceanography and hydrography
- Surveying, photogrammetry, and cartography
- Meteorology and climatology
- Geodesy and geophysics

- Glaciology and ice physics
 - Radio, radar, and allied fields
 - Geology, volcanology, and seismology
 - Geography
 - Botany and its subdivisions
 - Zoology and its subdivisions
 - Engineering research and applications
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Recommended language and form

In keeping with long-established policies based upon trends in the normal evolution of geographic names, considerations will be given to brevity, simplicity, and unambiguity in selecting the form of names derived by these procedures:

- a) The application of full names and/or titles of persons is not considered appropriate. Titles will be translated where their use is required.
 - b) The names of organizations, ships, and other nonpersonal names, when unduly long and cumbersome, will ordinarily be used in some shortened though intelligible form.
 - c) English generics are preferred. Complete translation of names will generally be avoided, but well established translated forms may be accepted.
 - d) An English generic may be added, or may be substituted for an included generic term, in the case of nonpersonal, non-English, single-word names that include a generic or a definite article, or both.
 - e) Board-approved romanization systems are used for transliteration from non-Roman alphabets.
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Inappropriate names

Names in the following categories will not be considered, unless otherwise appropriate according to the principles stated herein, or unless such names are widely and firmly established as of the date of approval of these principles.

- a) Names suggested because of relationship or friendship
- b) Names of contributors of funds, equipment, and supplies, who by the nature and tone of their advertising have endeavored to capitalize or to gain some commercial advantage as a result of their donations. This would not include advantages resulting from testing of donated equipment under Antarctic conditions; in cases of doubt, the decision shall be in favor of the individual whose name has been proposed
- c) The names of products, sled dogs, or pets will ordinarily not be considered appropriate for application to natural features.