YUKON GEOGRAPHICAL PLACE NAMES BOARD

2003-2004 Annual Report

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INTRODUCTION

The names of places reflect the Yukon's diverse culture, history, and landscape. Names in the Yukon such as Aishihik, Kusawa, Tuchitua, are a few of the native names found on a modern map of the Yukon. Yukon First Nations named rivers, mountains, lakes and landmarks long before the first non-native explorers and settlers arrived in the territory. Names such as Gyò Cho Chú (Big Salmon River) tell where animals and fish are plentiful. Other names, such as Thechà̀l Mä̀n (Sekulman Lake), 'Stone Scraper for Hides' describe artifacts, people and events. Today's Yukon's First Nations still remember these names and are working to record them for future generations.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, explorers, fur traders, and prospectors came to the Yukon to trade with Indian people, search for gold, and explore the vast landscape, giving their own names to the land. The Danish explorer Vitus Bering, who entered the newly formed navy of the Russian tsar Peter the Great and in 1724 was appointed to conduct an expedition to explore the water routes between Siberia and North America, was the first non-native to name a geographical feature in northwest America. In 1741, Bering named an island lying off the coast in the proximity of a very prominent mountain. Anchoring near the island he gave it the name of St. Elias as it was that Saint's day. The dominant mountain in question was, later in the eighteenth century, given the name of the island and Mount St. Elias became one of several peaks that define the border between Canada's Yukon Territory and the 49th State of Alaska.

While Bering and explorers to follow gave names to geographical features without asking the local names for places, others, such as geologist George Dawson and the Yukon's first Commissioner, William Ogilvie, recorded many native names during their years in the Yukon, including the Yusezyu and Tatchun Rivers in central Yukon.

Many of the official names on the Yukon map today were given by non-native settlers who came to the Yukon during the Gold Rush period. In the area around Dawson City, Allgold, Bonanza, Eureka, and Nogold celebrate the successes–and failures–of the miners who came to the territory during the Klondike Gold Rush. Names such as Carcross (from Caribou Crossing), Fox Lake, and Eagle's Nest Bluff, testify to the richness of the Yukon's wildlife resources. Other places, such as Five Finger Rapids on the Yukon River, Blackstone Mountain, and White River, were named for the shape, colour, and form of the land and water itself. One of the best known names of this type is Whitehorse, which took its name from the White Horse Rapids, whose foamy white crests reminded early prospectors of horses' manes. Another account tells of a chief's white horse drowning there.

YUKON'S PLACE NAMES PROCESS

In 1897, Canada established the *Geographic Board of Canada* whose mandate was to approve official place names across the country. Interestingly, one of the motivations for establishing this board came from events happening in the Yukon, from the discovery of gold in the Klondike. Today, the successor to this Board is known as the *Geographical Names Board of Canada* (GNBC) which until recently was referred to as the *Canadian Permanent Committee on Geographical Names* (CPCGN). The GNBC is made up of 23 members representing the provinces and territories, as well as federal departments that deal with surveying, mapping, translation, archives, parks, and native affairs.

In 1986, the responsibility for naming geographical features was transferred from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to the Government of Yukon, putting geographical naming in the hands of Yukon residents for the first time. As part of this transfer the government of Yukon established the *Yukon Geographical Names Board* (YGNB) in 1987 to undertake the job of researching and approving geographical names.

In 1995, under the Yukon Land Claims Agreement, the *Yukon Geographical Names Board* was replaced by the *Yukon Geographical Place Names*

Board (YGPNB). Like its predecessor, it was established with the primary function and responsibility to consider and recommend the naming or renaming of places or features located within the Yukon.

WORK OF THE YUKON TOPONYMIST

During the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the Yukon Government's Cultural Services Branch hired a long needed Yukon Toponymist to address the backlog of place name applications. The Yukon government processed a total of forty-seven (47) place name applications that had been submitted, thirty-eight (38) by Ms. Gertie Tom for the Big Salmon region, and nine (9) by the Little Salmon/ Carmacks First Nation in previous years. Subsequently, the Board reviewed and recommended these place names sites to the Minister of Culture and Tourism who formally approved these names in early 2004.

THE YUKON GEOGRAPHICAL PLACE NAMES BOARD

The *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board* (YGPNB) is constituted under the *Umbrella Final Agreement* (UFA), signed by the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN), the Yukon Government and the Government of Canada. The Board's primary function is to consider and recommend the naming or renaming of places or features located within the Yukon with special reference to Chapter 13, Section 11 of the UFA. However, the Board's mandate does not include the naming/renaming of features or sites within municipal boundaries or of transportation corridors (highways and bridges).

BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

The Board is comprised of six Yukoners each having a common interest in developing place name policies that address all Yukoners. Three members are nominated by the Yukon Government and three by the Council of Yukon First Nations. All board members are appointed for three-year terms by the Minister of Cultural Services (Yukon government) and are currently in the final year of their terms which expire in June of 2004.

BOARD MEMBER'S PROFILES

John Ritter: During the 2003-2004 fiscal year period Mr. Ritter acted as Chair of the Board. He is also the Director of the Yukon Native Language Centre, and was re-appointed on March 12, 2001 for his third consecutive three-year term to the Board. As a linguist, his contribution to the spelling and pronunciation of native place names is invaluable. Also crucial to the place name application process is his ability to provide the Board with translation services during consultation periods held with native elders.

Florence Whyard: Mrs. Whyard was appointed to the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board on March 12, 2001 for a three-year period. She is a founding member of the Yukon Historical and Museums' Association, the Old Log Church Heritage Society, and the Yukon Transportation Museum Society and is a Member of the Order of Canada. Mrs. Whyard resigned from the Board in July of 2003.

Percy Henry: Mr. Henry is a Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation elder from Dawson City. He has been an active participant and contributor to key heritage preservation projects. In March of 2000 he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Yukon Historical and Museums Association. He is a fluent speaker of the Hän and Gwich'in languages. He has created a Hän Language dictionary and lesson booklet which is used in the Dawson City School. Mr. Henry was re-appointed in October 2001 for his third term to the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board.

Sam Johnston: Mr. Johnston is an elder with the Teslin Tlingit First Nation in Teslin, Yukon. He was appointed to the Board for his second term on March 12, 2001. He is a former member of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. In his role as an elder and advisor, he is a major contributor to the Board and its review process of Yukon place names.

Margaret Workman: Ms. Workman is a Southern Tutchone language specialist with the Yukon Native Language Centre. She was re-appointed to the Board in January of 2002. As one of the original members of the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board, she is currently serving on the Board for her second term. She has been involved with Yukon place names work for many years.

Monty Alford: A retired federal hydrographer and resident of the Yukon since 1949, Mr. Alford was appointed to the Board in August, 2003. A member of several mountaineering expeditions within the Yukon, Mr. Alford's familiarity with the mountain landscape that comprises an important and defining aspect of the territory is of considerable value to the board. He is a Member of the Order of Canada.

Left to Right: Jeff Hunston (Geographical Names Board of Canada), Monty Alford, Percy Henry, Garry Njootli (Yukon Toponymist), Margaret Workman, John Ritter, Sam Johnston, Gary White (Secretariat). Missing: Florence Whyard (resigned, July, 2003).

YUKON'S PLACE NAME REVIEW PROCESS

Initially, place name applications are submitted to the Yukon Government's Heritage Resources Unit, a component of Cultural Services Branch within the Department of Tourism and Culture. Once place name applications are received by the Yukon government, the Yukon Toponymist is assigned with the task of establishing the correct location of the proposed place name site, ensuring that the correct spelling has been recorded on the application and including the reason for the request. This review helps to ensure that the proposed place name feature is accurately located with its latitude and longitude recorded and that its meaning, spelling and cultural significance is correctly documented. Once the information provided on the application has been confirmed by Yukon Government staff, it is then forwarded to the Board for its review and for consideration in the naming/renaming process before being sent to the Minister of Culture and Tourism for final approval. Processing place name applications in as timely a manner as possible is a priority of the Board. However, the speed with which a place name application is processed is dependent on a number of factors that include:

- Completeness of the application as submitted to the Heritage Resources Unit, Cultural Services Branch, before being received by the Board;
- Whether the site identified is on First Nation traditional or settlement land, federal or territorial lands.
- Whether the site identified is located within a park.

The status of individual place name applications is tracked by means of a *Geographical Place Names Application Process Flow Sheet* (See Figure 1).

NAMING FEATURES ON SETTLEMENT LANDS

Under the Land Claim Final Agreement, the Board is directed to consider the following procedures when reviewing place name applications on Settlement Lands.

- When considering the naming or renaming of places or features located within the traditional territory of a Yukon First Nation, or when acting with a federal agency where joint jurisdiction over the naming of the place or feature exists, the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board* shall consult with that Yukon First Nation or federal agency.
- A Yukon First Nation may name or rename any geographical features on settlement land and such place names shall be deemed to have been approved by the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board.*
- Traditional aboriginal place names shall be included, to the extent practicable and in accordance with map production specifications of Canada, on revised maps of the National Topographic Series.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND THE REVIEW PROCESS

During this report period the Board continued to encourage Yukon First Nation applicants as well as other organizations and individuals to submit place names for consideration to the Yukon Government.

During its review of each application, the Board uses the following criteria as guidelines:

- First priority shall be given to names with long-standing local usage by the general public, particularly indigenous names in the local native language.
- The Board has no jurisdiction over the names of municipalities, parks, territorial divisions, and other legal bodies that have been created by, or result from, legislation.
- Names for rivers, lakes, creeks, and other physical features should be used for all parts of the feature. In other words, you would not call the Yukon River one name at Whitehorse and another name at Dawson City.
- Proposals to name a place or geographical feature after a specific person should show how the person to be commemorated has contributed significantly to the area where the feature is located. In most cases, personal names are given to geographical features only after a person's death.
- When proposing names for unnamed features – those for which no local names exist – preference will be given to names from native languages, names that describe the feature, names associated with historical events, and names of people who have made an important contribution to the area where the name is proposed.
- Geographical names should be recognizable words or acceptable combinations of words, and should be in good taste. Names that are discriminatory or derogatory from the point of view of race, sex, colour, creed, or political affiliation are not accepted.
- The spelling and accenting of names should agree with the rules of the language in which they are written.

The Board has no jurisdiction over the assignment of names within municipalities, parks, territorial divisions, or other legal bodies that have been created by, or result from, legislation. Proposals for name changes within a national park are subject to federal review and approval. When geographical features are wholly or partly located within a national park, names and name change proposals are to be referred through the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC).

PLACE NAME APPLICATION REVIEW

During 2003-2004, the Board received a number of requests from interested individuals and organizations about the place name application and review process. The Board met during the months of May, November and December of 2003 and again in March, 2004 to review place name applications. There is currently a backlog of 148 place names applications to be processed by the government and subsequently reviewed by the Board.

TABLE 1

APPLICANT	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS TO BE PROCESSED/REVIEWED	YEAR SUBMITTED
Teslin Tlingit Council	60	1988-1993
Selkirk First Nation	12	1991
Carcross/Tagish First Nation	1	1992
Champagne/Aishihik First Nation	3	1992
Nacho Ny'ak Dun First Nation	55	1997-1998
Miscellaneous	17	1986-2004
Total	**148**	

TABLE 2

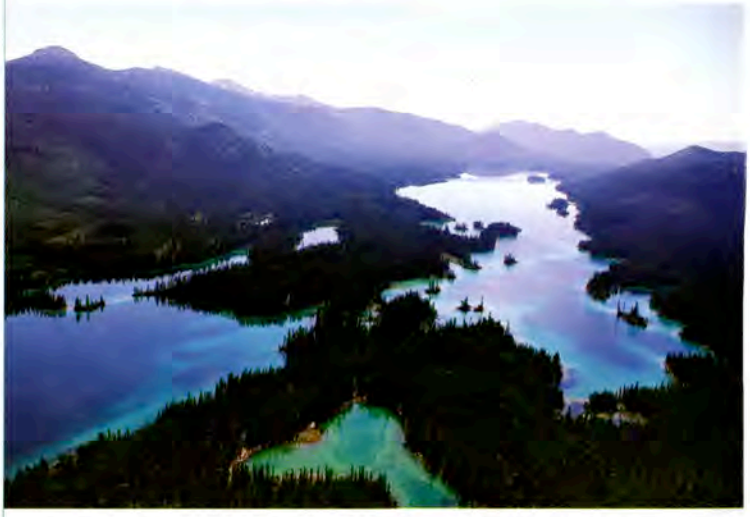
Place Name Applications Approved During 2003-2004

APPLICANT	APPLICATIONS APPROVED DURING 2003-2004
Gertie Tom – Big Salmon Place Names	38
Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation	9
Total	**47**

BOARD DOCUMENTATION PROJECT

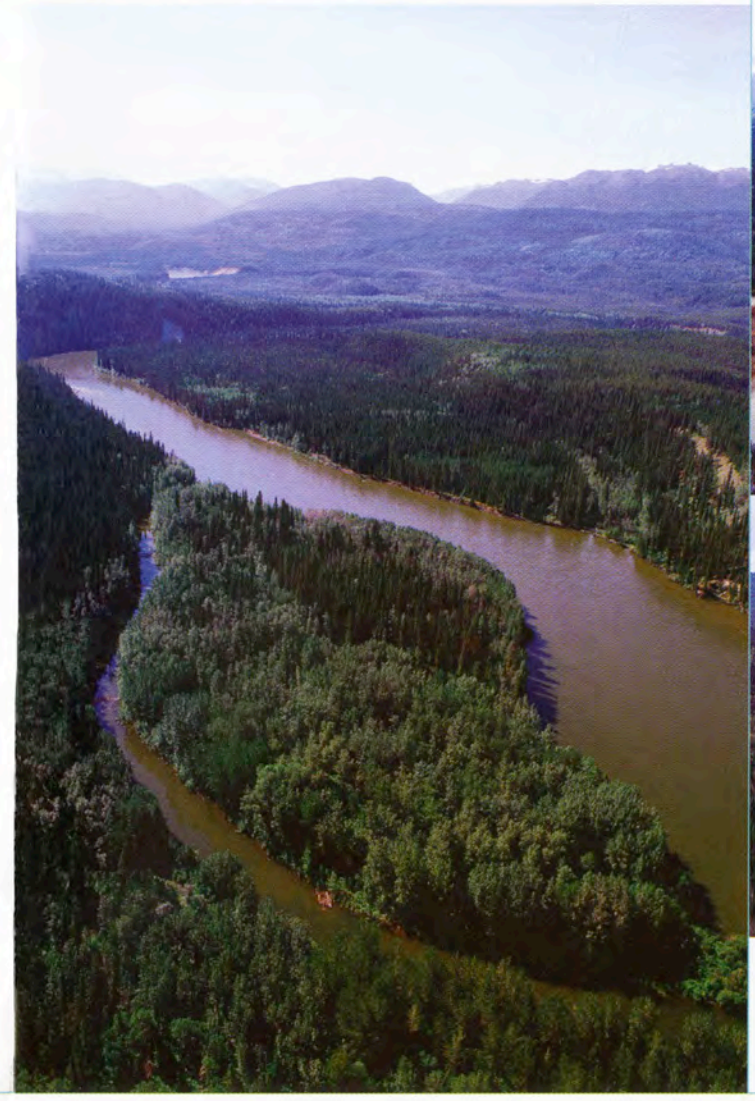
During the year the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board in cooperation with the Yukon Native Language Centre cost-shared a photo documentation project of Yukon features. A First Nation representative as well as a Board member assisted a photographer by identifying and verifying the location of each place name site photographed. This team also ensured that each site photographed was documented and that the accurate spelling and pronunciation of each feature was recorded.

All landscape photographs in this Annual Report were taken as part of this project.



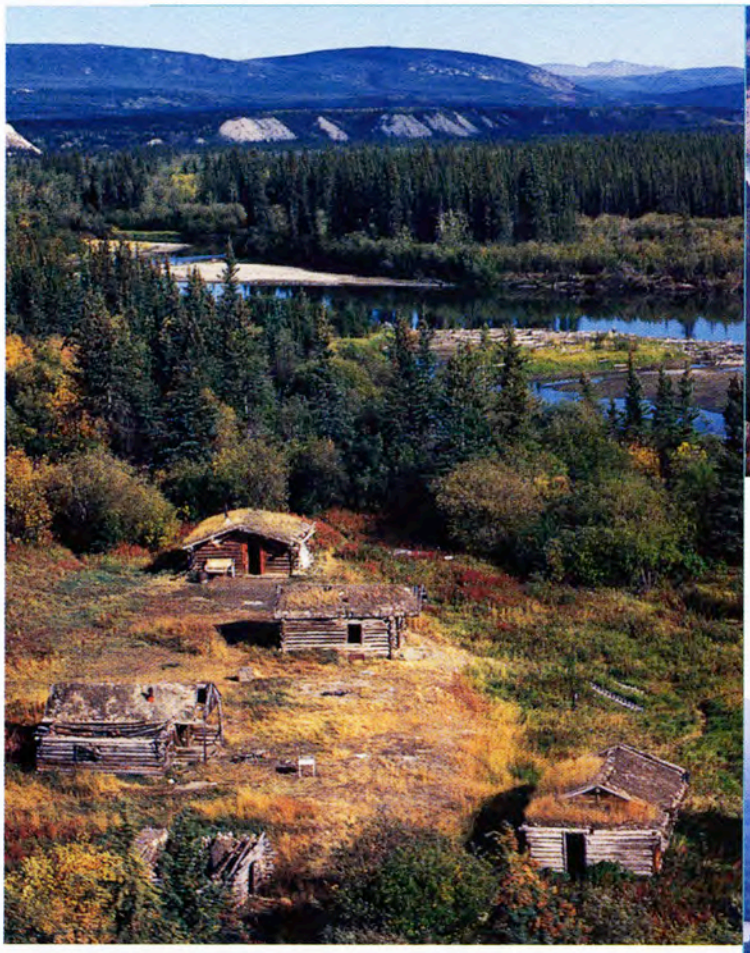
These small lakes are part of the chain that includes Baker Lake. The smaller lakes are known as Män Nizhrüą (Shiny Lakes) in the Southern Tutchone language. They are located on the hill just above Tetl'àni (Dog Salmon Slough) on Teslin River. The region was a favoured hunting area of First Nation people who gathered there. The haze in the photograph is a result of forest fires which burned during the summer of 2004.

Tetl'àni (Dog Salmon Slough) on Teslin River was an important gathering place for First Nations people including the Tagish Kwan and the Northern and Southern Tutchone. In the autumn, chum salmon were taken in large numbers at this site. Above and below are two photographs illustrating this feature.



Teslin Crossing on Teslin River is known locally as Winter Crossing. One building remains of the native village once located here. The nearby Open Creek is known as T'ǟw Tà'ǖr in Southern Tutchone (Where the Grayling Come Upstream). The old trail from Lake Laberge to Livingstone Creek is still visible. Above and below are two photographs illustrating this feature.

Junction of Thirty Mile River (left) and Teslin River (Délin Chú) [right], with Hootalinqua located just downstream on the left side. Contemporary maps show the Yukon River starting at this junction.



These two photographs illustrate Big Salmon Village before and after the wildfires. Below is an aerial view of the traditional Big Salmon village after summer fires had burned the surrounding forest. Fortunately, the buildings were preserved. The village site is called Gyò Chú Dachäk (Mouth of [King] Salmon River). It is located at the mouth of the Big Salmon River (Gyò Cho Chú) where it joins the Yukon River.

Eagle's Nest Bluff is located on the Yukon River between Little Salmon and Carmacks. The Northern Tutchone name for this prominent feature is Ts'àl Cho An (Den of the Giant Frog). In this region, the Yukon River is known as Tàgé Cho (Great River).

Roaring Bull Rapids on Teslin River. Teslin River is called Délin Chú in Northern Tutchone. At certain times of the year, there are strong rapids along this stretch of the river which is called Netadiinlin in the Northern Tutchone language.

BOARD WEBSITE PROJECT

At the Board's meeting held in March of 2004, the Board took the initiative of developing a website, the plans of which had been discussed at past meetings by Board members who believed a website would be of great assistance in educating the public and assisting those parties interested in submitting place name applications for review and approval. The website, expected to be launched in the fall of 2005, will allow viewing of the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board's Annual Reports*, which include pictures of documented place name sites. It will also establish links between other place name websites and websites considered of relevance to the *Yukon Geographical Place Names Board*. This should help to make parties more aware of the processes required for having place name sites approved, which in turn with the cooperation of the Yukon Toponymist, should assist in processing future place name applications in an efficient and timely manner.

OVER THE NEXT YEAR

Over the next year the Board will continue to review the backlog of place name applications once the applications have been processed by the Yukon Toponymist, as well as review new applications as they are received from the Yukon Government. As part of this process, Board members will continue to consult with applicants, First Nations, language experts and the public to ensure that all place names submitted are accurately documented before being considered for review.

Other initiatives planned by the Board for the upcoming year include the photo documentation of approved place names sites in partnership with the Yukon Native Language Centre.

YUKON PLACE NAME INFORMATION

Information about Yukon and other Canadian place names can be obtained by consulting the *Geographic Names Board of Canada* database. Information about the database can be obtained from:

Geo Names
Natural Resources Canada
Room 634-615 Booth Street
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0E9

http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca

For information about the Yukon's geographical place name application process contact:

Yukon Toponymist
Cultural Services Branch
Heritage Resources Unit
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Canada Y1A 2C6

Telephone: (867) 667-3099
Website: www.yukonheritage.com

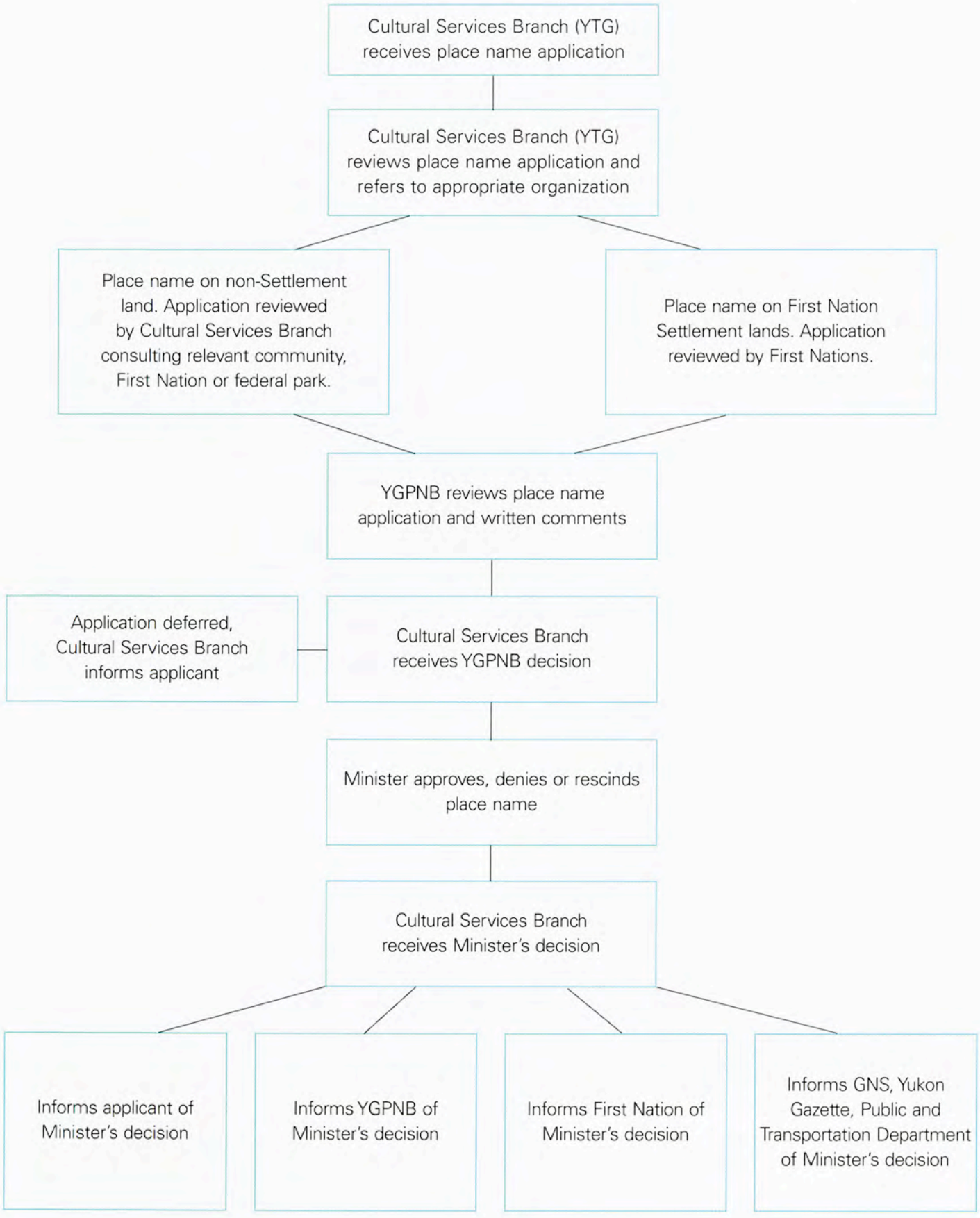
If you have questions or require additional information about the activities and mandate of the Board, please contact the:

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board
P.O. Box 31164
Whitehorse, Yukon
Canada Y1A 5P7

Telephone: (867) 393-3982
Fax: (867) 667-7006
Website: www.yukonplacenames.ca

FIGURE 1

GEOGRAPHICAL PLACE NAMES APPLICATION PROCESS FLOW CHART



CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

MacKay LLP

mackay.ca

Review Engagement Report

To the Members of
Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

We have reviewed the balance sheet of Yukon Geographical Place Names Board at March 31, 2004 and the statements of revenue and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. Our review was made in accordance with Canadian generally accepted standards for review engagements and accordingly consisted primarily of enquiry, analytical procedures and discussion related to information supplied to us by the Board.

A review does not constitute an audit and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on these financial statements.

Based on our review, nothing has come to our attention that causes us to believe that these financial statements are not, in all material respects, in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Whitehorse, Yukon

June 18, 2004

MacKay LLP

Chartered Accountants

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures
(Unaudited - see Review Engagement Report)

For the year ended March 31,	2004	2003
Revenue		
Contribution - Yukon Government	$ 61,065	$ 59,899
Investment	711	699
	61,776	60,598
Expenditures		
Advertising	601	-
Annual report	4,064	2,940
Documentation	-	2,866
Honoraria	3,375	3,813
Information brochures and pamphlets	1,544	6,778
Insurance	627	500
Office equipment	-	1,191
Office	2,086	1,482
Professional fees	1,449	1,346
Registration fees	-	118
Secretariat	27,821	34,569
Telephone	240	108
Travel and accommodation	3,247	5,273
Web-site maintenance	2,622	-
	47,676	60,984
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	**$ 14,100**	$ (386)

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Changes in Net Assets
(Unaudited - see Review Engagement Report)

For the year ended March 31,			**2004**	2003
	Invested in capital assets	Unrestricted	Total	Total
Net Assets, beginning of year	$ 10,897	$ 138,952	**$ 149,849**	$ 149,004
Invested in capital assets	-	-	**-**	1,231
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	-	14,100	**14,100**	(386)
Net Assets, end of year	$ 10,897	$ 153,052	**$ 163,949**	$ 149,849

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Balance Sheet
(Unaudited - see Review Engagement Report)

As at March 31,	2004	2003
Assets		
Current		
Cash	$ 156,116	$ 147,525
Accounts receivable	1,320	1,820
Prepaid expenses	101	79
	157,537	149,424
Capital assets (note 2)	**10,897**	10,897
	$ 168,434	$ 160,321
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	**$ 4,485**	$ 10,472
Net assets		
Invested in capital assets	**10,897**	10,897
Unrestricted	**153,052**	138,952
	163,949	149,849
	$ 168,434	$ 160,321

Approved on behalf of the Board:

_____, Member

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Statement of Cash Flows
(Unaudited - see Review Engagement Report)

For the year ended March 31,	2004	2003
Cash provided by (used in)		
Operating activities		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures	$ 14,100	$ (386)
Change in non-cash operating working capital		
Accounts receivable	500	73
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(6,009)	7,002
	8,591	6,689
Investing activities		
Purchase in Capital assets	-	(1,191)
Increase in net assets invested in capital assets	-	(1,191)
	-	-
Increase in cash	**8,591**	6,689
Cash, beginning of year	**147,525**	140,836
Cash, end of year	**$ 156,116**	$ 147,525

Yukon Geographical Place Names Board

Notes to Financial Statements
(Unaudited - see Review Engagement Report)

March 31, 2004

1. Accounting Policies

The organization is a non-profit entity established under the Umbrella Final Agreement, passed by the Government of Canada and Government of Yukon, to consider and recommend the naming or re-naming of places or features located within the Yukon, to the Yukon Minister of Heritage.

(a) Capital assets
Capital assets are expensed when they are purchased and are recorded on the balance sheet at their historical cost. The net assets invested in capital assets account represents the historical cost of all capital assets less the principal amount of any debt outstanding on the purchase of the assets.

(b) Revenue
Revenue from grants is recorded when received or when it is determined thay are receivable, whichever occurs first and are credited to revenue in the period to which they relate.

(c) Financial instruments
All significant financial assets, financial liabilities and equity instruments of the Board are either recognized or disclosed in the financial statements together with available information for a reasonable assessment of future cash flows, interest rate risk and credit risk.

2. Capital Assets at cost

	2004	2003
Office furniture and equipment	**10,897**	10,897

3. Economic Dependence

The board is dependent upon government funds for the continuation of its activities.

Cover: These small lakes are part of a chain that includes Baker Lake. The smaller lakes are known as Män Nizhrụ̈ą (Shiny Lakes) in the Southern Tutchone language. They are located on the hill just above Tetl'àni (Dog Salmon Slough) on Teslin River. The region was a favourite hunting area of First Nation people who gathered there.

Photos by Wayne Towriss for the Yukon Native Language Centre and the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board