

Domestic Geographic Name Report

1 Use this form to recommend a feature name or to suggest a name change.

2. For features on Federal lands, coordinate requests with the agency (U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc.) For the administrative area in which the land is located

3. On the reverse side of this form give information on the local usage and authority for recommended name.

4. For more information about the Geographic Names Information System or the National Gazetteer Program, contact the U.S. Board on Geographic Names at 703-648-4544.

5. Return this form to:

Executive Secretary for Domestic
Geographic Names
U.S. Geological Survey
523 National Center
Reston, VA 22092

Action Requested

Proposed New Name: _____ **Recommended Name:** Aurora Lagoon
Application Change: _____ **State:** Alaska
Name Change: **County or Equivalent:** Aleutians East Borough
Other: _____ **Administrative Area:** Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge

Specific Area Covered:

Latitude: 55 ° 31 ' 27 " N Longitude: 161 ° 41 ' 45 " W
Latitude: _____ ° _____ ' _____ " NS Longitude: _____ ° _____ ' _____ " WS
Center: X Heading End _____
Section(s) _____ Township(s) 53, 54 Range(s) 18W Meridian Seward Elevation _____

Type of Feature (stream, mountain, populated place, etc.): Bay

Is the Feature identified (including other names), in the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS)? 1418423

Yes No _____ Unknown _____ If Yes, how is it listed? Chinaman Lagoon

Description of feature (physical shape, length, width, direction of flow, etc.):

The bay is approximately 550 acres in size. It is on the east side of the Alaska Peninsula, on the west shore of Pavlov Bay, 1.8 miles west of Ivan Island. The community of King Cove is south of the bay, and community of Sand Point is to the east. The bay is in the National Marine Fisheries Service Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas and Alaska Department of Fish and Game Marine Protected Area.

USGS Port Moller C-6 1:63,360

Maps and other sources using recommended name (including scale and date).

Other name (variants)

Maps and other sources using other name or application (including scale and date).

Chinaman Lagoon

USGS maps since 1953, OCS charts since 1940, USF&WS and AK Dept. of Fish & materials since 1970s

Name information such as origin, meaning of the recommended name, historical significance, biographic data (if commemorative), nature of usage or application, or any other pertinent information:

The proposer considers the current name, Chinaman Lagoon (also Chinaman's Lagoon), offensive and "does not want a racist slur as a descriptive characteristic attached to the state." The proposer has not visited the place. She recommended Aurora Lagoon because auroras signify Alaska. The proposal is a result of an online video that encouraged viewers to propose changes to names that they found offensive or racist. Chinaman Lagoon was one of the features specifically mentioned in the video. [YouTube, July 21, 2019, What's With The Racist Names Of So Many American Places?]

The origin of the current name is unknown. The *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names* (1967) says the name was reported in local use by the USGS in 1929. That same year the name appears on a map and is used in a photo caption in an article in *National Geographic*. Area residents in 1933 recounted that Tom Williams, a local sea otter trapper who died in 1901 near Belkofski, "associated with a Chinese man, who had camp near Chinaman's Lagoon. When the man disappeared, Williams was seen wearing the man's boots [and Williams] was shunned as a murderer. . . ." (*The History and Ethnohistory of the Aleutians East Borough* (1999))

Is the recommended name in local usage? Yes ___ No X If Yes, approximately how many years? _____

Is there local opposition to, or conflict with the recommended name (as located)?

None known.

For proposed new name, please provide evidence that feature is unnamed:

N/A

Additional information:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Ron Salz, USBGN representative, contacted Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge manager, complex manager and project leader, no opinion, 11.27.2019

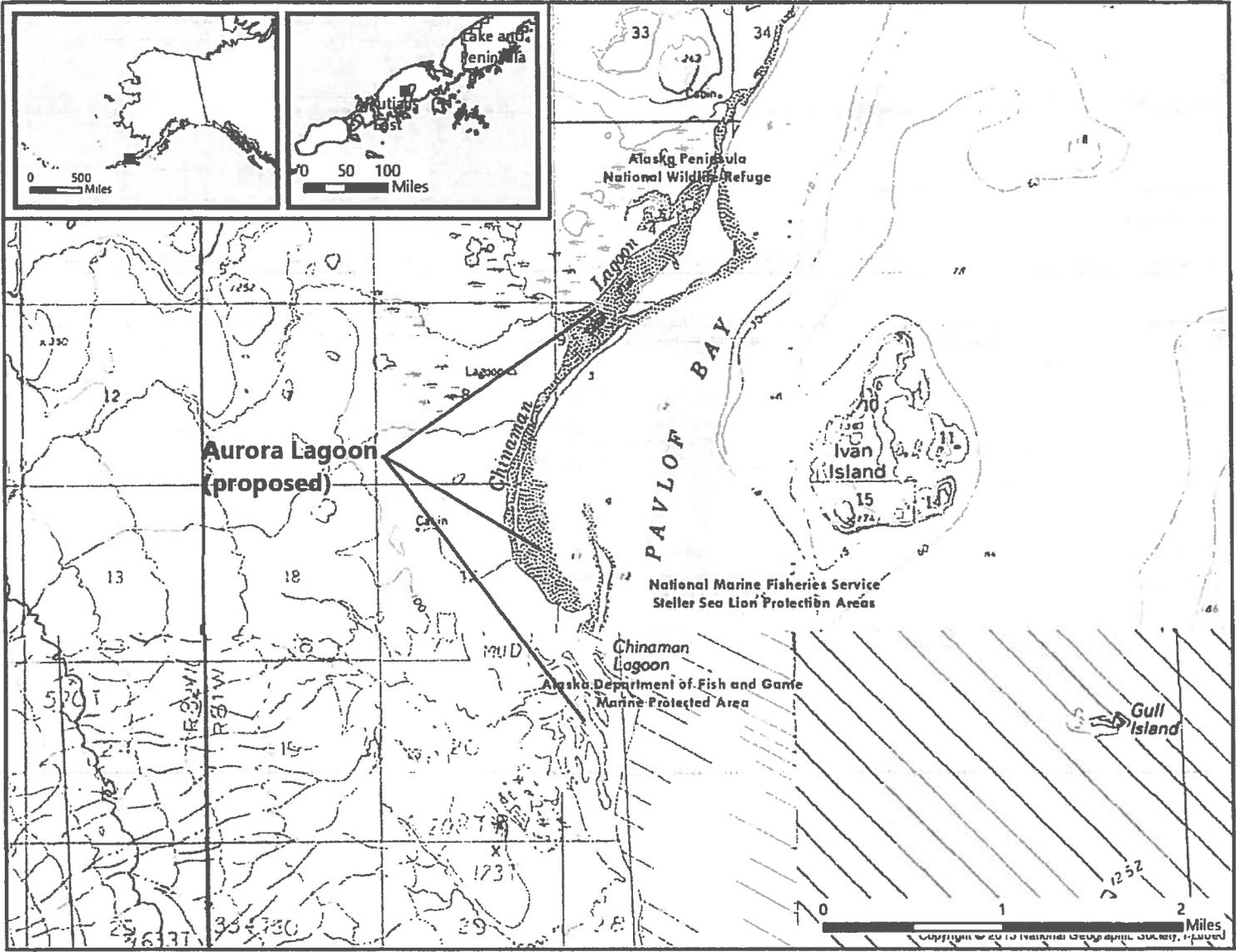
Letter sent to the following, noting endorsement or objection to name must be made in writing and asking for comments by January 15, 2020.

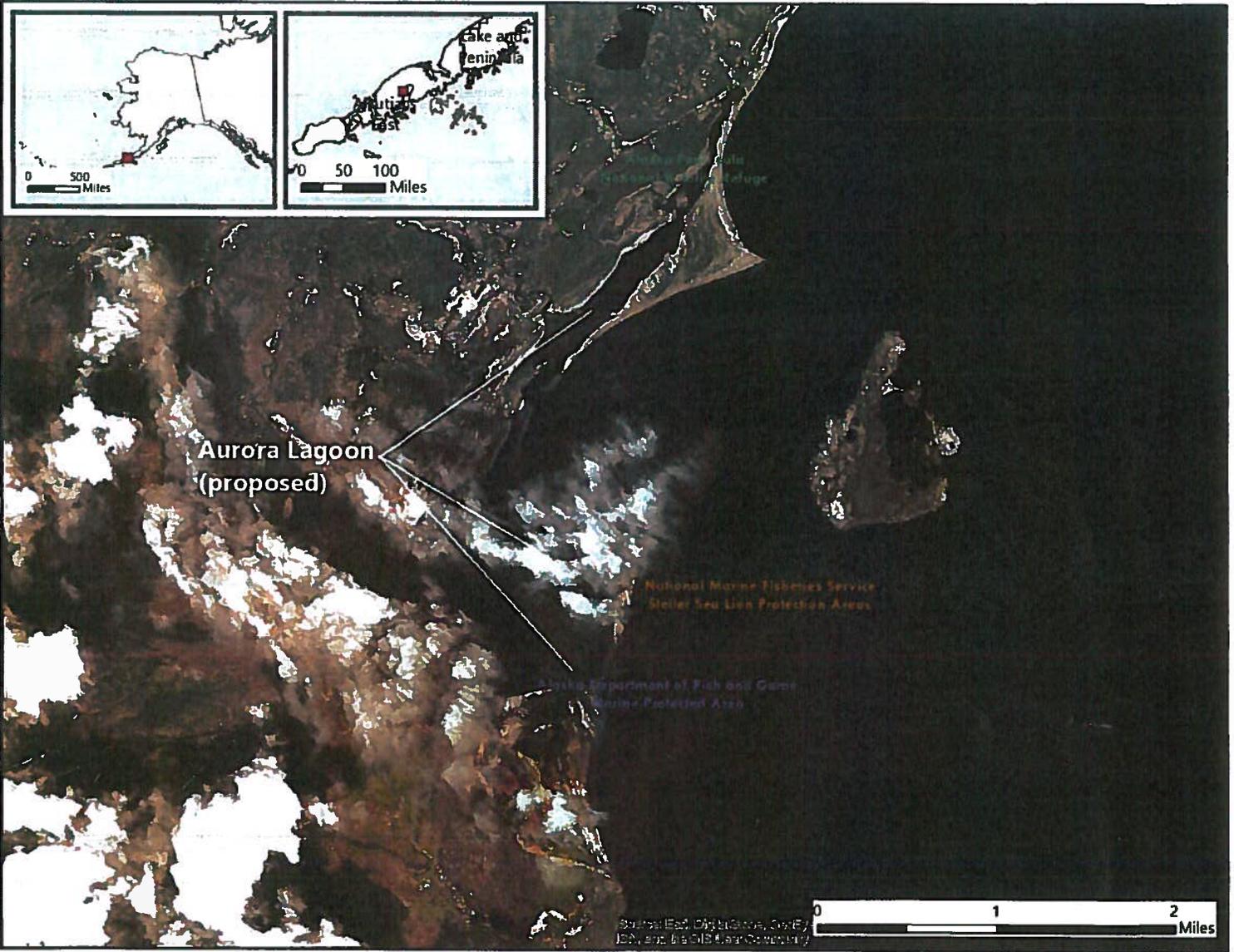
- NOAA, Alaska Navigation Manager, alaska.navmanager@noaa.gov
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Douglas Vincent-Lang, Commissioner, P.O. Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811-5526, doug.vincent-lang@alaska.gov
- Aleutians East Borough, P.O. Box 349, Sand Point, AK 99661, tanderson@acboro.org
- City of King Cove, P.O. Box 37, King Cove, AK 99612, cityclerk@kingcoveak.org
- Native Village of Belkofski, P.O. Box 57, King Cove, AK 99612, kcbtc@arctic.net
- Agdaagux Tribe of King Cove, P.O. Box 249, King Cove, AK 99612, ettakuzakin@yahoo.com / atc@arctic.net
- The King Cove Corporation, P.O. Box 38, King Cove, AK 99612, dellat@arctic.net
- City of Sand Point, Glen Gardner, Jr., Mayor, P.O. Box 249, Sand Point, AK 99661, spcity@arctic.net
- Pauloff Harbor Village, P.O. Box 97, Sand Point, AK 99661, pauloffadmin@outlook.com
- Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point Village, P.O. Box 447, Sand Point, AK 99661, qttadmin@arctic.net
- Shumagin Corporation, P.O. Box 189, Sand Point, AK 99661, marita@shumagin.com

The Alaska Historical Commission is expected to review the proposed name change at its winter 2020 meeting.

Copy submitted by: Name (first, M.I., last)	Title	Phone (day)	Date
Mary Ann Colrud		907.360.0766	7.22.19
Company or Agency	Address (city, State, and Zip)		
springfn2002@gmail.com	12040 Town Park Circle, Eagle River, Alaska 99577		
Copy Prepared by (if other than above)	Title	Phone (day)	Date
Judith E. Bittner	SHPO	(907) 269-8721	11.21.19
Company or Agency	Address (city, State, and Zip)		
Alaska Department of Natural Resources/Office of History and Archaeology	550 West 7 th Ave., Suite 1310, Anchorage, AK 99501-3565		

Authority for Recommended Name:	Mailing Address and Telephone	Occupation	Years in Area
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Approved

Promulgation authorized
Executive Secretary
Domestic Geographic Names

UNITED STATES
BOARD ON GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

CASE BRIEF (Domestic)

Aurora Lagoon: bay; approx. 550 acres; in the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge on the W shore of Pavlov Bay, 1.8 mi. W of Ivan Island; named for the northern lights (aurora borealis) which can be seen in Alaska; Tps54&53S, R18W, Seward Meridian; Aleutians East Borough, Alaska; 55°31'27"N, 161°41'45"W; USGS map – Port Moller C-6 1:63,360 (central point); Not: Chinaman Lagoon, Chinaman's Lagoon.

https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/gazvector.getesrimap?p_lat=55.5241667&p_longi=-161.6958333&fid=1418423

Proposal: to change a name considered to be offensive

Map: USGS Port Moller C-6 1:63,360 (central point)

Proponent: MaryAnn Colrud; Eagle River, AK

Administrative area: Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge / National Marine Fisheries Service Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas / Alaska Department of Fish and Game Marine Protected Area

Previous BGN Action: None

Names associated with feature:

GNIS: Chinaman Lagoon (FID 1418423)

Local Usage: None found

Published: Chinaman Lagoon (USGS 1953, 1963, 1988; OCS charts since 1929; *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names* 1967; USGS Bulletin 1028-A 1955; USGS Bulletin 1200 1966; Office of Subsistence Management map [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service] 2006; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Acquisition of Inholdings in Alaska National Wildlife Refuges" 1988; Office of Coast Survey, *Geographic Names in the Coastal Areas of Alaska* 1940; Alaska Department of Fish and Game 1977, 1991, 2014, 2019, *National Geographic Magazine*, Vol. LV, No. 1 1929; *ego trip's Big Book of Racism!* 2002; *Alaska: A Climbing Guide* 2001); Chinaman's Lagoon (Alaska Department of Fish and Game 2000; *The History and Ethnohistory of the Aleutians East Borough* 1999)

Case Summary: This proposal is to change the name of Chinaman Lagoon, a bay in Aleutians East Borough, to Aurora Lagoon. The proponent, a resident of the Anchorage area, states that the proposed name "signifies Alaska" and she "does not want a racist slur as a descriptive characteristic attached to [their] state." The bay is on Pavlov Bay, west of Ivan Island and within the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge, the National Marine Fisheries Service Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas, and an Alaska Department of Fish and Game Marine Protected Area.

The origin of the current name is unknown. *The History and Ethnohistory of the Aleutians East Borough* (1999) reported on an account by area residents recorded in 1933 that Tom Williams, a local sea otter trapper who died in 1901 near Belkofski, "associated with a Chinese man, who had a camp near Chinaman's Lagoon. When the man disappeared, Williams was seen wearing the man's boots [and Williams] was shunned as a murderer. . ."

The name Chinaman Lagoon has been shown on USGS maps since 1953 and is listed in the Office of Coast Survey's 1940 *Geographic Names in the Coastal Areas of Alaska*. According to Orth's 1967 *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, the name was reported in local use by the USGS in 1929. The first published use of the name was in a 1929 *National Geographic* article, where it

appears on a map and in a photo caption. Documents published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game since the 1970s refer to Chinaman Lagoon or Chinaman's Lagoon.

Chinaman Lagoon is at a latitude that experiences auroras only during moderate to extreme geomagnetic storms, which have an average frequency of 600 to 1700 events per 11-year solar cycle.

Proposed by: MaryAnn Colrud; Eagle River, AK
Submitted by: same
Prepared by: M. O'Donnell
Case ID: 5110
Reviewed by: J.Runyon

Date: 7/22/19
Date: same
Date: 9/16/19
Quarterly Review List: 437
Date: 9/28/19

ALASKA

Change Chinaman Lagoon to Aurora Lagoon: bay; approx. 550 acres; in the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge on the W shore of Pavlov Bay, 1.8 mi. W of Ivan Island; named for the northern lights (aurora borealis) which can be seen in Alaska; Tps54&53S, R18W, Seward Meridian; Aleutians East Borough, Alaska; 55°31'27"N, 161°41'45"W; USGS map - Port Moller C-6 1:63,360 (central point); Not: Chinaman Lagoon, Chinaman's Lagoon.

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Administrative area: Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge / National Marine Fisheries Service Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas / Alaska Department of Fish and Game Marine Protected Area

Previous BGN Action: None

Names associated with feature:

GNIS: Chinaman Lagoon (FID 1418423)

Local Usage: None found

Published: Chinaman Lagoon (USGS 1953, 1963, 1988; OCS charts since 1929; *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, 1967; USGS Bulletin 1028-A, 1955; USGS Bulletin 1200, 1966; Office of Subsistence Management map [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service], 2006; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Acquisition of Inholdings in Alaska National Wildlife Refuges," 1988; Office of Coast Survey, *Geographic Names in the Coastal Areas of Alaska*, 1940; Alaska Department of Fish and Game 1977, 1991, 2014, 2019, *National Geographic Magazine*, Vol. LV, No. 1, 1929; *ego trip's Big Book of Racism!* 2002; *Alaska: A Climbing Guide*, 2001); Chinaman's Lagoon (Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 2000; *The History and Ethnohistory of the Aleutians East Borough*, 1999)

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Chinaman Lagoon is at a latitude that experiences auroras only during moderate to extreme geomagnetic storms, which have an average frequency of 600 to 1700 events per 11-year solar cycle.



O'Donnell, Matthew (Contractor) <mjodonnell@contractor.usgs.gov>

FWS response - proposal to rename Chinaman Lagoon to Aurora

Ron Salz <ron_salz@fws.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 10:19 AM

To: "O'Donnell, Matthew" <mjodonnell@usgs.gov>

Hi Matt,

After having quite a few emails with the Alaska Refuge manager, complex manager and project leader, the FWS position on the renaming is "No opinion and do not oppose."



Ron

Ron Salz, Chief Cartographer

FWS Mapper

National Wildlife Refuge System
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Headquarters
5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: NWRS

Falls Church, VA, 22041-3803
703-358-2404 (office)
ron_salz@fws.gov



O'Donnell, Matthew (Contractor) <mjodonnell@contractor.usgs.gov>

FWS response - proposal to rename Chinaman Lagoon to Aurora

O'Donnell, Matthew (Contractor) <mjodonnell@contractor.usgs.gov>

Mon, Nov 25, 2019 at 11:17 AM

To: Ron Salz <ron_salz@fws.gov>

Hi Ron,

Thanks for working with those folks in Alaska and also for explaining your contact process a little more at the last meeting. I'll let the AK BGN and NOAA know about this recommendation.

I'll quote the "No opinion and do not oppose" response in the docket write up. Other BGN members might question the difference between the two, so I may look to you to explain! The no opinion/no objection distinction is slight sometimes and maybe we need to clarify what they mean.

Matt

Matt O'Donnell | Xcellent Technology Solutions, Inc.
Contractor in support of U.S. Board on Geographic Names | Domestic Names Committee
Phone: 703.648.4553
Email: mjodonnell@contractor.usgs.gov
Room 2B101

[Quoted text hidden]

Antonson, Joan (DNR)

From: Antonson, Joan (DNR)
Sent: Friday, November 29, 2019 12:38 PM
To: Vincent-Lang, Douglas S (DFG)
Subject: RE: Geographic name proposal review

Commissioner Vincent-Lang:

Thank you for taking time to read and comment on the geographic name change proposal. Your comment will be made available to the members of the Alaska Historical Commission when they review and consider the it.

All the best,

Jo Antonson

From: Vincent-Lang, Douglas S (DFG) <doug.vincent-lang@alaska.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 29, 2019 12:28 PM
To: Antonson, Joan (DNR) <jo.antonson@alaska.gov>
Subject: RE: Geographic name proposal review

My thoughts are that someone finding a name "offensive" is subjective and it is even more so when the offended party has no ties to the "offensively" named location. (see: The proposer has not visited the place)

As a Department we are neutral due to subjectivity.

We suggest you converse with the local population in the area. The local population of nearby Squaw Harbor may find the proposed name change and removal of local historic recognition more offensive than the current name.

From: Antonson, Joan (DNR) <jo.antonson@alaska.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 29, 2019 8:21 AM
To: Vincent-Lang, Douglas S (DFG) <doug.vincent-lang@alaska.gov>
Subject: Geographic name proposal review

Dear Commission Vincent-Lang:

The Alaska Historical Commission, the state's geographic names review board, has received a proposal to change the name of Chinaman Lagoon on the east side of the Alaska Peninsula on the west shore of Pavlov Bay. The proposed new name is Aurora Lagoon. Enclosed is a letter with more information, the proposal package, and the guidelines the Alaska Historical Commission has adopted regarding geographic names. Commission members would like to know if you have comments on the proposed name and if you recommend approving the name.

If you have any questions about the proposal or the state's geographic name program please contact Judy Bittner at judy.bittner@alaska.gov or call 907.269.8715.

Thank you.

Jo Antonson
State Historian



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Natural Resources

DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION
Alaska Historical Commission

550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565
907.269.8721
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha>

November 29, 2019

Re: 3050-3 Aurora Lagoon

Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point Village
P.O. Box 447
Sand Point, Alaska 99661
qttadmin@arctic.net

Dear Tribal Members:

The Alaska Historical Commission has received a geographic name proposal to change the name of Chinaman Lagoon on the east side of the Alaska Peninsula on the west shore of Pavlov Bay. The proposed new name is Aurora Lagoon. Enclosed is a copy of the proposal for your review, maps showing the feature's location, and the guidelines for geographic names the Alaska Historical Commission members have established.

The commission would appreciate your comments on the proposed name. To object or to endorse the proposed name, you must respond in writing. Your comments need to be received by January 15, 2020. You can respond with a letter or by writing your comments in the box below. Please send your comments by mail to the address above or by email to dnr.oha@alaska.gov.

If you have any questions about the state geographic names program, please contact Judy Bittner at email judy.bittner@alaska.gov or by phone at 907.269.8715.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joan M. Antonson.

Joan M. Antonson
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures

I **object** to the proposed name because: If the lagoon were to be renamed, it would be appropriate to work with the native people of the region to identify an appropriate name. No evidence of local support was provided for the proposed "Aurora Lagoon", probably because this proposed change is a stereotypical and romanticized vision of generic Alaska, which doesn't reflect the region or the people who live here. A more detailed letter is included with this official response.

Signed: Handwritten signature of M. D. O'Neil.

Date: 12.12.19.



QAGAN TAYAGUNGIN TRIBE
P.O. BOX 447
SAND POINT, ALASKA 99661
PHONE (907) 383-5616

December 12, 2019

RECEIVED

DEC 19 2019

Division of Natural Resources
Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation
Alaska Historical Commission
550 West 7th Ave, Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3565

OHA

Dear Ms. Antonson and Commissioners,

The Qagan Tayagungin Tribe of Sand Point is a federally recognized Tribe located on Popof Island, on the southeast side of the Alaska Peninsula. We've received your letter indicating Ms. Colrud's request to rename Chinaman Lagoon on the west side of Pavlof Bay to Aurora Lagoon "because auroras signify Alaska". While we don't necessarily disagree with renaming Chinaman Lagoon, we do disagree with the proposed name. Aurora Lagoon is a stereotypical and romanticized name which doesn't reflect the region which this lagoon is located, or the people who live here. Being located on the south side of the Alaska Peninsula, we rarely even see the Auroras.

In reviewing the Alaska Historical Commission's Guidelines for proposing an official name for a geographic feature, evidence of local support was not obtained by the proposer prior to submitting the proposed name change. The proposed name does not refer to a name that has evolved over a period of years and is called by the area as a whole. This lagoon has never been referred to by the proposed name, it is not a name that is commonly used, or linguistically appropriate to the area as the native people in the region were never consulted.

We hope the Alaska Historical Commission will reject this proposed change, and differ this back to the people of the region to identify a name which is more appropriate to the region and people who live here.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alvin Osterback Jr.
President



THE STATE
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Natural Resources

DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION
Alaska Historical Commission

550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501 3565
907 269 8721
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha>

November 29, 2019

Re: 3050-3 Aurora Lagoon

DEC 10 2019

Pauloff Harbor Village
P.O. Box 97
Sand Point, Alaska 99661
pauloffadmin@outlook.com

Dear Village Members:

The Alaska Historical Commission has received a geographic name proposal to change the name of Chinaman Lagoon on the east side of the Alaska Peninsula on the west shore of Pavlov Bay. The proposed new name is Aurora Lagoon. Enclosed is a copy of the proposal for your review, maps showing the feature's location, and the guidelines for geographic names the Alaska Historical Commission members have established.

The commission would appreciate your comments on the proposed name. To object or to endorse the proposed name, you must respond in writing. Your comments need to be received by January 15, 2020. You can respond with a letter or by writing your comments in the box below. Please send your comments by mail to the address above or by email to dnr.oha@alaska.gov.

If you have any questions about the state geographic names program, please contact Judy Bittner at email judy.bittner@alaska.gov or by phone at 907.269.8715.

Sincerely,

Joan M. Antonson
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures

I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object / <input type="checkbox"/> endorse the proposed name because: <u>this is part of the</u>	
<u>history of the region.</u>	
Signed: <u>Judy P Bittner</u>	Date: <u>1/15/2020</u>