

The Government of Nunavut's position is that, while acknowledging that the current delays are not acceptable, the review of place name proposals is necessary and reflects best practice. The Government of Nunavut's digital geospatial and non-geospatial standards for place name information management align with well-established standards and guidelines. In some cases, the Inuit Heritage Trust has adopted different standards which often conflict with those of the Government of Nunavut, which can further add to processing delays.

The Inuit Heritage Trust's assertion that due to the pace of technological change, place names are vulnerable to loss prior to becoming official is completely unsubstantiated. In that context, the status of a place name is irrelevant with respect to its vulnerability to loss, and the Government of Nunavut's official names database is not stored on floppy disks or cassette tapes. The Government of Nunavut uses the latest versions of database and mapping software and its toponymy data management system is at no greater risk of obsolescence than that used by the Inuit Heritage Trust.

In the interest of fairness, and as correctly noted by the Trust, the Department does process naming proposals in the order in which they are received. However, because of the concerns expressed by the Trust about their proposals, the Department hired an Assistant Toponymist to work exclusively on the Trust's proposals. As a result, the Trust's place name proposals are being given special priority.

There is room for improvement, but we believe that progress is being made. Since January 2012, 404 place names have been made official, and the Department projects that an additional 936 names will be ready for decision in the first quarter of 2013.

The Government of Nunavut will continue to review its naming procedures to identify ways in which the approval process can be shortened.

Yours Sincerely,



Hon. James Arreak
Minister of Culture & Heritage