



File Code: 1300/7700

Date: DEC - 4 2009

Mr. Lee Roy Brinegar
110 3rd Street
Rock Springs, WY 82901

Dear Mr. Brinegar:

This letter is in response to your Request for Reconsideration (RFR) dated September 22, 2009, and received by our office on October 1, 2009. The RFR relates to your original Data Challenge of June 15, 2009, in which you question the accuracy of information contained in the Motorized Travel Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Ashley National Forest in Sweetwater County, Wyoming. You believe that the Holmes Crossing Recreation Site on the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area is misnamed and that the references to this site, contained in the EIS and related maps are in error.

We have reviewed your RFR and have found no reason to alter our original response to the data challenge. All references to the geographic name in question, Holmes Crossing Recreation Site, are accurate because they correctly refer to the actual feature on the ground. The EIS and related documents meet the requirements of the Data Quality Act pertaining to utility and transparency, as well as objectivity and quality.

The name "Holmes Crossing Recreation Site" is in compliance with the policies of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (US BGN). The US BGN is an interagency board established by Executive Order in 1890 to provide geographic naming standards and policies for use by the Federal Government. The US BGN assigns authority to federal land management agencies such as the Forest Service for the naming of all administrative geographic features within their jurisdiction. Administrative features include campsites, facilities, dams, and areas, such as Holmes Crossing Recreation Site. The Forest Service sets its own naming policies for naming of such administrative features. The authority is delegated to the Regional Forester who is advised to consider not only the area's history, but also the American Indian culture, geology, geography, physiography, biology, and forestry of the area. The primary reason for renaming the recreation site was because the original name contained the word "squaw" which many individuals consider to be derogatory.

The 'crux of the matter' is that you believe your family's ferry operation should have been the replacement name selected for this site, given its historic location. You have provided evidence to support this reasoning, but there is no policy which requires it, and as noted above, there are many factors to be considered when selecting a geographic name. To start the process, the Forest Service performed a search of the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS), the official repository for all domestic geographic names. All federal maps and publications must use only names contained in GNIS. The commemorative name Brinegar Ranch (feature ID 1598377) was found in GNIS. This name honors your family and provides historical



historical documentation of your family's contribution in settling the area. There is a road with the Brinegar name in the vicinity as well. Policy discourages duplicate commemorative names, and so the name Holmes Crossing was chosen for the recreation site, in recognition of another family that helped to settle the area. You will note that there are no other Holmes names in the GNIS in Sweetwater County, Wyoming. You may view these records in the GNIS at:
<http://geonames.usgs.gov/domestic/index.html>

Each GNIS record contains a field for historical information which may be updated at any time to document additional details about that name. If you wish to add additional information to the GNIS record to describe the history of the Brinegar Ranch and ferry operation please contact the GNIS Manager through one of the following methods:

email: BGNEEXEC@usgs.gov

Mail:

U.S. Board on Geographic Names

U.S. Geological Survey

523 National Center

Reston, VA 20192-0523

(703) 648-4552

Fax: (703) 648-4549

I hope that this information has helped to clarify the US BGN and Forest Service policy on geographic names and the decision to name Holmes Crossing Recreation Area. If you should have any administrative procedural questions, please contact George Vargas, Forest Service Quality of Information Officer, at (202) 205-0444 or at gvargas@fs.fed.us

Sincerely,



HANK KASHDAN

Associate Chief

cc: Betsy Kanalley, Deidre S StLouis