A DATABASE TO FACILITATE REMOVAL OF SQUAW GEOGRAPHIC PLACE NAMES IN OREGON

Caroline Rouwalk
Geography 575
12-9-2008

OUTLINE

- Background on Squaw Geographic place names in Oregon
- Database design objective and intended applications
- Data layers, methods and techniques used
- Application demonstration of database
- Limitations and problems of final database
BACKGROUND ON OREGON’S SQUAW GEOGRAPHIC PLACE NAMES

DATABASE OBJECTIVE

- To aid in the identification of the remaining “Squaw” geographic names in Oregon and to facilitate gathering of required data for a name change submittal to the Oregon Geographic Names Board and the US Geographic Names Board.
BACKGROUND

- Recent push in the past decade to rename *Squaw* geographic features
- Controversial - Proponents say *Squaw* is an offensive word, others say it’s simply a word for *women* or *girl*.
- 2001 – At the urging of Oregon tribes, Oregon legislature passed a resolution declaring that all remaining *Squaw* features in the state of Oregon be renamed
- 2008 - Oregon has the most *Squaw* geographic features of any state in the union. 126 still exist in Oregon.

PEOPLE INVOLVED

- **Oregon Geographic Names Board** - State board of appointed representatives who oversee all geographic name changes and additions
- **United States Board on Geographic Names** - Federal authority to address name problems, name inquiries, name changes, and new name proposals
- **Oregon Tribes**
- **US Geological Survey** - Administers the Geographic Names Information System, GNIS, the database of all US Geographic Names
- **Anyone** with vested interest in the name change, e.g., BLM, ODF, private land owners, etc.
TACKLING THE PROBLEM

- The Oregon Geographic Names Board voted to urge Oregon Tribes to propose replacement names.
- Tribes often don’t have the resources and staff to take on the process.
- USGS Oregon Geospatial Liaison, an advisor to the OGNB, volunteered to help facilitate the process to anyone wanting assistance by providing research assistance and GIS services.

SUBMITTING A NAME CHANGE

- Anyone can submit a new name, change an existing name or apply to have name moved to a different feature.
- In Oregon, application is sent to the Oregon Geographic Names Board (OGNB) where it is reviewed.
- All interested parties contacted, landowners, government agencies, general public.
WHAT INFORMATION IS NEEDED TO SUBMIT A NAME CHANGE TO GNIS

- Proposed Name
- GNIS Feature ID number
- Type of feature, e.g., lake, mountain, creek, river, etc.
- Location information, state, county, Lat/Long DMS and DD, Township Range information, maps, etc.
- Reason for requesting change
- Any helpful supplemental information

WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG TO CHANGE THE OREGON SQUAW NAMES?

- Process is tedious
- Requires many man hours to collect necessary information for name change
- All interested parties must be contacted and given an opportunity to comment on the name
- Can take up to a year or longer to get final approval from Oregon Geographic Names Board to pass on to the US Board on Geographic Names
## Database Design: Oregon's Squaw Geographic Place Names

### Data Layers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Layer</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GNIS Oregon Squaw Names</td>
<td>GNIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian ceded land</td>
<td>Interior Columbia Ecosystem Management Program-ICBEMP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Limits 2007</td>
<td>Oregon Department of Transportation - ODOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways</td>
<td>ODOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Lands</td>
<td>National Atlas – Bureau of Indian Affairs - BIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon County Boundaries</td>
<td>Bureau of Land Management - BLM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Owned Land</td>
<td>Oregon Department of Forestry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon Waterbodies</td>
<td>BLM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Create Feature Dataset, Add Data Layers

Create Database Topologies
APPLICATION OF DATABASE

Squaw Creek Falls, Sisters, Oregon

www.mcneillsonwheels.com/sqSquawCreekFalls2.jpg

Squaw Name locations: 25 mile buffer
INTERSECT BUFFER WITH PUBLIC OWNED LANDS

- To determine who owns land where the feature exists and other parties who would need notification of name change

INTERSECT BUFFER WITH PUBLIC OWNED LANDS

- Resultant attribute table with necessary information
Future Refinement

- Test different buffers to narrow amount of ownership
- Create model to share with other states
- Find a better Indian Lands shapefile
- Add tribal contact table
- Make a report with map template to easily disseminate information

REFERENCES

QUESTIONS?