



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Office of Native Hawaiian Relations

300 Ala Moana Boulevard, Box 50165, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96850



U.S. Department of the Interior Proposed Internal Guidance for the Use of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i by Bureaus and Offices

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who is proposing the 'ōlelo Hawai'i policy and why?

The U.S. Department of the Interior (Department) has developed internal guidance for the Department's bureaus and offices for the respectful and proper use of 'ōlelo Hawai'i by personnel whose primary language is not 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

2. What is the purpose of the Department's 'ōlelo Hawai'i policy?

The guidance supports and enhance existing efforts to promote the use of 'ōlelo Hawai'i when preparing Federal documents and other communications that reference people, places, plants, and animals in Hawai'i.

3. What organizations or entities will be required to follow the Department's 'ōlelo Hawai'i policy?

As a part of the Departmental Manual (see below), the Department's 'ōlelo Hawai'i policy applies only to the Department's bureaus and offices. These organizations include, but are not limited to: the Office of the Secretary, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

4. Where will the Department's 'ōlelo Hawai'i policy be kept?

The internal guidance on the use of 'ōlelo Hawai'i is proposed as an addition to the Departmental Manual (DM) at 513 DM 3.

5. What is the [U.S. Department of the Interior Departmental Manual](#)?

The Departmental Manual (DM) is essentially the instruction or user manual for those who work at the Department of the Interior. The DM documents and issues instructions, policies, and procedures that apply to all Departmental activities. For more information, please see the [chapter on the DM's Purpose and Structure at 011 DM 1](#).

6. Why is the proposed guidance on 'ōlelo Hawai'i organized this way?

The proposed policy and procedures are written and organized to conform with Departmental formatting requirements.

7. Who is the Hawai‘i Board on Geographic Names (HBGN)?

The Hawai‘i State Board on Geographic Names (<https://planning.hawaii.gov/gis/hbgn>) was created by Act 50 of the 1974 Hawai‘i State Legislature. Act 50 (Chapter 4E, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes) states that the purpose of the Board is “... to assure uniformity in the use and spelling of the names of geographic features within the State.” The Board is responsible for designating the official names and spellings of geographic features in Hawai‘i. In its deliberations, the Board solicits and considers the advice and recommendations of the appropriate County government officials and, as appropriate, other knowledgeable persons.

At the request of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, a Federal body created in 1890 which is administered by DOI’s U.S. Geological Survey, the HBGN conducted a multi-year project to review each of the over 10,000 names that appear on the quadrangle maps and/or in the U.S. Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) and to add the ‘okina and kahakō as appropriate. Documents available on the HBGN website list the decisions that have been rendered so far by the Board. Thus far, the Board has reviewed all of the names appearing on the USGS quadrangle maps, and is now reviewing additional names that appear in the GNIS.

8. When does the Department expect to finalize its ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i guidance?

The Department expects to finalize its ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i policy in the Summer of 2023, subject to the number and diversity of comments received.

9. Will the Office host a Native Hawaiian Community consultation session?

The Office will host a virtual Native Hawaiian Community consultation session on Monday, February 27, 2023, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm Hawai‘i Standard Time.

Please register for the session by using the following link:

https://blm.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_IqzhDnk7QbOujhXe8QbrGw.

10. I am not able to attend or submit all of my comments at the scheduled consultation sessions, so where should I send my comments and by when?

Please send all written comments to doi_onhr_hhl@ios.doi.gov. All comments must be sent to the Office by 11:59 pm HST on March 31, 2023. Comments received may be posted, without redactions, on the DOI.GOV website and in the Office’s consultation report on the DM chapter, so submit only information you wish to make publicly available.