



PO Box 201800 • 1515 E 6th Ave • Helena, MT 59620-1800
406-444-5355 • <http://nris.mt.gov>

February 8, 2012

Mr. Lou Yost
Executive Secretary
Domestic Names Committee
United States Board on Geographic Names
523 National Center
Reston, VA 20192-0523

Dear Mr. Yost,

As Montana's State Geographic Names Authority, I recommend that the Domestic Names Committee approve the proposal from Review List 408 to name a stream in Missoula County, Montana as Sim-heh Creek and I recommend that they reject the proposal from Review List 406 to name the same stream Grizzly Creek.

The Montana State Library released a public notice on August 30, 2011 seeking comments on the Grizzly Creek proposal. The local newspaper published an article about it. We did not receive any comments in support of the name. We received information from two local residents opposing the proposal who said that the stream may have been referred to as Charity Creek or Kitty Girl Creek in the past, and a message from a local resident suggesting that the stream be named Horseshoe Creek after their ranch.

When the Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee and Elders Advisory Council of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) became aware of the proposal, they visited the site and decided to submit the Sim-heh Creek counterproposal. The Missoula County Commissioners endorsed Sim-heh Creek on November 11, 2011.

Based on the information that the CSKT had made a counter-proposal that had been approved by the county commission, the proponents of the Charity Creek, Kitty Girl Creek, and Horseshoe Creek names declined to submit proposals for those names.

I found a water rights application from 1976 in which the applicant had written the name Kitty Girl Creek on this creek on the map enclosed with the application. The state water rights division chose to ignore this name and designated the water right source as "Unnamed Tributary of Finley Creek". Although I was told that other local residents used the Kitty Girl Creek name, the informant chose not to come forward with any of their names.

There are 8 other Grizzly Creeks in Montana, including a stream less than 20 miles away from the stream in question, which is also on the Flathead Reservation. I recommend acceptance of the Sim-heh Creek proposal because it was made by the tribal government for a stream on its reservation, because of the endorsement of the county commissioners, and because of the proximity of another stream already named Grizzly Creek.

A summary of the correspondence we received as a result of our public notice, the County Commissioners' letter of approval, and the text of the local newspaper article are available at http://msl.mt.gov/geonames/comments/40802_Sim-heh_Creek.zip.

Sincerely Yours,

Gerald J Daumiller
Montana State Library