

Piikani Nation Chief and Council

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October 2, 2017.

Dear Acting Director Werkheiser, US BGN Gilbert, and US BGN Executive Secretary Yost,

Official Submission to Change the Names of Mount Doane and Hayden Valley in Yellowstone National Park.

The Piikani Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy's relationship with the United States is enshrined in Article VI of the US Constitution through the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty and the 1855 Lame Bull Treaty. We share these treaties and rights with our sister nations of the Blackfoot Confederacy, and we defend these treaty rights and that government-to-government relationship today.

Our ancestors made pilgrimages to the sacred area now called Yellowstone. Our ancestors knew this area intimately, and all of what is now Yellowstone National Park is within our ancestral territory, as can be seen on some of the oldest maps we retain, interpretations of which were recently reproduced in Bull Child, *The Sun Came Down*. When it was a homeland and not a Park, we used to collect our red and black paints here. We collected medicines here. We held vision quests here. We revered the creative powers of our Mother, the Earth here. So well did we know this area, that some of the names our people used for features of this land are still used today, like the Beartooth Mountains, and Heart Mountain near Cody. Today, we make this submission because of very different names: Mount Doane and Hayden Valley.

Let us be clear – Tribal Nations have been calling for these names to be changed for years, and this was formalized by resolution of the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council in 2014. That resolution was supported by the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Association. Now, every Tribal Nation in Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, joined by tribes in Idaho, Oklahoma, Arizona and the province of Alberta, have signed the Declaration calling for the names of Mount Doane and Hayden Valley in Yellowstone National Park to be changed. We speak with one voice on this issue, and the plurality of those Tribal Nations are recognized by the Department of the Interior as "Associated Tribes of Yellowstone."

To conclude this official submission to change the names, I will simply quote from the Declaration, but add that the words of Doane and Hayden speak for themselves. It is not a matter of opinion as to whether they said these things, it is fact.

Mount Doane

To quote Mr. Paul Wylie, author of *Blood on the Marias*, “Clearly, Gustavus Cheney Doane was not worthy of having a mountain named for him, then or now.” Lieutenant Gustavus C. Doane, 2nd Cavalry, was responsible for one of the worst war crimes in US history, an act of genocide committed on this soil, that he bragged about throughout his life. Doane showed no remorse for this atrocity; on the contrary, he was proud of it. In his application to become superintendent of Yellowstone he wrote, “I was the first and last man in [the] Piegan (Piikani) camp January 23, 1870. Greatest slaughter of Indians ever made by U.S. Troops.” Of the government’s record of 173 victims, authorities admitted that only 15 were men of fighting age, the rest were elders, women and children, “None older than twelve years and many of them in their mother’s arms,” reported Indian Agent W.A. Pease. Doane subsequently ordered several of the Piikani he took prisoner to be executed with axes.

“I remember the day when we slaughtered the Piegans, and how it occurred to me, as I sat down on the bank of the Marias & watched the stream of their blood, which ran down on the surface of the frozen river over half a mile, that the work we were then doing would be rewarded, as it has been,” Doane wrote in a letter to Wilbur F. Sanders on January 7, 1891, by which time he was already being celebrated as “the man who discovered Wonderland” for his role in the 1870 expedition that was instrumental in “Yellowstone” becoming a national park. Doane didn’t discover anything, this land was never lost, for our it had nurtured our ancestors since the close of the Pleistocene epoch. Doane was a war criminal. It seems highly doubtful that the National Park Service or US Geological Service would sanction a section of the Everglades to be named in honor of Lieutenant William Calley due to his connection to Florida. What Calley did at My Lai, Doane did on the Marias.

We propose that Mount Doane be renamed ‘First People’s Mountain,’ not only to honor the memories of the Piikani victims of the Marias Massacre, but also in remembrance of those who suffered the same barbarity at the hands of those like Doane. The Cheyenne and Arapaho at Sand Creek. The Shoshone-Bannock at Bear River. The Lakota at Wounded Knee. ‘First People’s Mountain’ also recognizes the 10,000-year plus connection Native peoples have to this sacred place.

Hayden Valley

Dr. Ferdinand V. Hayden advocated the “extermination” of tribal people in an official government document (US Geological Survey of Wyoming) published in 1872. “Unless they are localized and made to enter upon agricultural and pastoral pursuits they must ultimately be exterminated. If extermination is the result of non-compliance, then compulsion is an act of mercy,” he wrote. That is advocacy for genocide with no plausible deniability. That Hayden was a white supremacist cannot be denied, he stated it himself in his book, *North America*: “Equally incontestable is the pre-eminence, both intellectual and moral, of the white race, which thus forms a natural aristocracy in the truest sense of the word.”

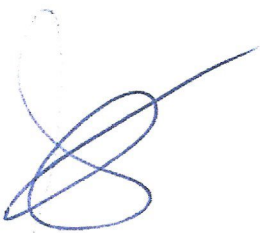
“The lower race” is how Hayden categorized tribal people, and in his words, “mixed bloods” were “tainted by the negro element” and “half breeds” by “vices” from “the indolence and wantonness of their Indian mothers.” Eighteen-years after General Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Dr. Hayden defended slave-holding Confederate plantation owners as “chivalrous and hospitable,” and insisted, “The treatment of the negro was not barbarous, and many seemingly cruel laws were greatly needed as measures of self-protection on the part of the whites.” If Hayden’s name is retained, when, at the very least, is there disquiet that a family’s album of smiles and selfies was made in a valley named after somebody who proposed the “extermination” of another race, and vindicated slave owners because, after all, he believed “the pre-eminence, both intellectual and moral, of the white race” was “incontestable”?

To deny genocide is complicity in its future enablement. Yellowstone is now an international destination. There is no light between Hayden’s promotion of the “extermination” of tribal people here, and that broadcast in 1994 by Ferdinand Nahimana and Jean Bosco Barayagwiza on Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines that incited genocide in Rwanda. Any attempt to rationalize the retention of Hayden’s name by arguing that he deserves this honor because he was a great geologist is a slippery slope to denying genocide. Would, by that logic, Dr. Radovan Karadzic’s advocacy of genocide and his responsibility for ethnic cleansing in Bosnia somehow be absolved due to his title and professional abilities? In the last eighty years, it is not difficult to find notorious “doctors” who have been exponents of genocide but whom, at some point, made contributions in their respective fields of expertise that some viewed as credible. Hayden’s words and incitement, like Doane’s actions - the atrocious truth - overrides anything they did in respect to Yellowstone.

We call for Hayden Valley to be renamed Buffalo Nations Valley in honor of all Tribal Nations that have treaty rights and interests to Greater Yellowstone, and those with an ancestral connection to this sacred landscape and our relatives, the Buffalo Nation.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,



Chief Stanley C. Grier, Chief of the Piikani Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy.