



THE CONFEDERATED SALISH AND KOOTENAI TRIBES
OF THE FLATHEAD NATION

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A People of Vision

A Confederation of the Salish,
Pend d' Oreille
and Kootenai Tribes

Acting Director Werkheiser
United States Board of Geographic Names
United States Geological Survey
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
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TRIBAL COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Vernon S. Finley - Chairman
Len Twoteeth - Vice Chair
Troy Felsman - Secretary
Anita Matt - Treasurer
Ronald Trahan
Shelly R. Fyant
Leonard W. Gray
Carole Lankford
Dennis Clairmont
Patty Stevens

September 28, 2017

Dear Director Werkheiser,

Please accept this letter as a formal request from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation (CSKT) to change the names of two physical features (Mount Doane and the Hayden Valley) located within Yellowstone National Park.

The CSKT connection to Yellowstone National Park runs deep. As one of the tribal nations designated by the U.S. Department of Interior as the "Associated Tribes of Yellowstone" the CSKT has utilized the Greater Yellowstone Area, including what is now Yellowstone National Park, from time immemorial. The CSKT continue to exercise treaty-reserved bison hunting within aboriginal territory, just outside of Yellowstone National Park, and tribal members continue to utilize areas within and near the Park for cultural purposes.

The Salish and Kootenai people had place-names and stories connected with the Yellowstone landscape long before non-Indians arrived in the area. To honor Lieutenant Doane, a man who proudly recalled leading the Marias massacre, or Dr. Ferdinand Hayden, an avowed white supremacist who called for the extinction of Indian people, is unacceptable.

As part of the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Association, the CSKT joined in submitting the 2014 resolution opposing the continued use of these names in Yellowstone National Park. The

CSKT also signed the attached declaration submitted to Superintendent Wenk through Deputy Superintendent Kenney at an inter-tribal gathering near the arch at the Park's north entrance on Saturday September 16, 2017.

The CSKT reiterate the formal request set out in the 2014 Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Resolution, and the recently submitted inter-tribal declaration, and ask for Mount Doane and the Hayden Valley be renamed in a manner that better reflects the true history of these places. We join numerous other tribal nations in asking for Mount Doane to be renamed First People's Mountain, and the Hayden Valley be renamed for what it is – the Buffalo Nations Valley.

While such a request may seem insignificant, the CSKT assure you the act of removing Doane and Hayden's names from Yellowstone National Park would be a great step towards a healing of past wrongs, and signify the United States government's willingness to put history in its proper context. If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this matter further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Vernon S. Finley, Chairman

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Council

cc. Secretary Ryan Zinke, United States Department of Interior
Superintendent Daniel Wenk, Yellowstone National Park