Cayou Channel
San Juan County - Name Change

Township: 36N
Range: 2W
Section: 21,22,23,24,26,27

USGS Quad: Shaw Island

Location Description: Bay; approx. 1.5 sq. miles; located between Shaw Island and Orcas Island in San Juan County.

Proposal Summary: CAYOU CHANNEL: Bay; approx. 1.5 sq. miles; located between Shaw Island and Orcas Island in San Juan County.; Name would honor Henry Cayou (1869-1959). Mr. Cayou was a prominent member of the commercial fishing industry and processing plant in Deer Harbor and farmed on Decatur Island.; San Juan County, Washington; Sec 21,22,23,24,26, and 27, T36N, R2W, Willamette Meridian; 48° 35' 23.653" N, 122° 55' 44.763" W; USGS map - Shaw Island 1:24,000.

Currently name Harney Channel, the proponent wishes to honor Henry Cayou. Mr. Cayou was a prominent member of the commercial fishing industry and processing plant in Deer Harbor and farmed on Decatur Island. It is presumed that Mr. Henry regularly transmitted this particular channel.

Proponent:
Ken Carrasco
PO Box 336
Orcas, WA 98280

Proposal Received: 4/15/2021
Initial Consideration: October 2021
Final Consideration:

WA Committee Decision:
WA Board Decision:
US Board Decision:

Opinions:
Proposed Name: Cayou Channel (a renaming of Harney Channel)

County: San Juan

Township: 36 N Range: 02 W Section(s): 22-27

Lat. 48° 35’ 28.73” N., Long. 122° 56’39.36” W (Begin)

Lat. 48° 35’ 06.41” N., Long. 122° 53’ 51.24” W (End)

Description

Type of feature: Marine waterway

Description of feature:

Harney Channel, as it is currently named, is the navigable marine waterway between Shaw and Orcas Island in the San Juan Islands. Its western limit is the longitude of Orcas Village according to Volume 10 of the US Coast Pilot. The eastern limit is at Hankin Point at the northeastern extreme of Shaw Island and can be thought to tend northeast at some undefined angle. The channel is about a half-mile in width and roughly two miles long.

If a stream, number of months of flow: N/A

Is this feature identified by other names or spellings? No other names known.
Has it ever been signed, posted, or publicized? If so, when?
Harney Channel is so named on federal NOAA charts and on commercial charting programs and maps. It is listed in the US Coast Pilot as a Minor Channel.

History

Origin of name:
Indigenous peoples can be assumed to have used this waterway for thousands of years, but their names for it are not known to these applicants. It was first described post-contact by the European culture in 1841 by the US Exploring Expedition led by Charles Wilkes. There is no record, that we know of, of any name given to this waterway by Wilkes’ party. That expedition typically named features in our county after naval heroes of the War of 1812 but, as General William S. Harney (1800 – 1889) was too young to participate in that conflict, it is unlikely that Harney Channel was named by the US Ex Ex for him.

Rather, the name Harney Channel is first found on British Admiralty charts of 1861 according to the researcher and author Richard Blumenthal\(^1\). However, the reasoning behind the name is a mystery to us as General Harney’s anti-British sentiments were well-known at the time and Harney had only been to the San Juan Islands once, for an inspection trip lasting only a couple of days, and most probably stayed in Griffin Bay well to the south of this channel. And far from contributing to the well-being of our islands, he almost brought war here during the Pig War (below).

We are proposing this name change because we feel that General William S. Harney committed a range of reprehensible crimes against humanity and is unworthy of the honor of commemoration in the state of Washington. A partial list of major incidents would include:

- As a colonel in 1855, Harney commanded a massacre by 600 soldiers on a village of about 250 Brulé and Oglala Sioux in Nebraska in “The Battle of Ash Hollow” (aka “The Battle of Blue Water Creek”)\(^2,3\). After first initiating a false peace talk with their chief so that his cavalry could sneak undetected behind the tribe, Harney ordered the attack which killed at least 86 Native Americans — the dead included not only warriors but also unarmed women, children, and the elderly. The survivors were forced to march over 140 miles to the nearest fort where they were imprisoned; many of them walked barefoot since most had been asleep in the early morning attack and their belongings were either kept by the soldiers after the battle as souvenirs or were burned. Harney’s biographer, George Rollie Adams, stated that “Although Washington officials who ordered the punitive expedition

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\(^3\) Hendee, David. May 30, 2017; updated October 16, 2019. Artifacts that tell story of massacre in Nebraska Territory will be displayed at state historical park. Nebraska World-Herald, Omaha, NE.
must share blame for the slaughter, Harney carried out the assignment with uncommon ferocity and vindictiveness” (page 133 in Adams 2001.

- In 1836, Major Harney beat a woman to death with a rawhide whip. She was a black slave owned by a relative, and Harney thought she knew where his keys had been placed so he beat her until she would tell him. A coroner’s jury ruled that she “came to her death by wounds inflicted by William S. Harney” and a county grand jury indicted him for murder. A subsequent trial found him not guilty, but commentators felt this result was to be expected concerning the death of a black person at the hands of a white in the 1830s.

- In 1859, General Harney famously drew the United States very close to armed conflict with Great Britain during the Pig War⁴. It was Harney who placed our military to confront Britain, and it took the Commanding General of the United State Army, Winfield Scott, to personally come to the Pacific Northwest from Washington D.C. to correct Harney’s impudent acts and lessen the possibility of war. One of the applicants of this proposal (Ken) is a military veteran and it has been an interesting exercise to speculate on the intensity and duration of such a war if Harney’s superiors had not intervened; thought of now as a quaintness from a previous age, that war actually could have spread into a protracted and expanded conflict with global ramifications.

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⁴ Vouri, Mike. 2016. The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay. Discover Your Northwest, Seattle, WA.
If a commemorative name, provide a summary of the life of the person including how and the length of time he/she was associated with the proposed feature.

All of Henry Cayou’s 90 years of life were spent in the San Juan Islands, in dramatic contrast to General Harney, and he can be presumed to have often traveled this channel which lies between his residences and businesses at Orcas’ Deer Harbor and Decatur Island.

Henry Cayou was born on Orcas Island in 1869 and was interred on Orcas upon his passing in 1959. His father was a trapper who was a very early settler of Orcas Island and his mother was from the longstanding indigenous villages on the shorelines of what is now known as Mitchell and Garrison Bays on San Juan Island, and she had Samish and Lummi relations. Henry Cayou’s first wife is often spoken of as Tlingit, but there is some question; certainly, though, she was Coast Salish. Many Native people in our area consider Henry Cayou as a relative and his relations can be found throughout the Salish Sea including Lummi, Swinomish, and Samish.

Henry Cayou also moved easily in the white world. He was a highly successful commercial fisherman (trapping and seining), and his fish processing plant at Deer Harbor was so successful that it kept local people employed even through the depression in the 1930’s. He was also an early local maritime leader, owning a steam tug and a successful boatyard in partnership with his brothers-in-law at Reads Bay of Decatur Island. He also farmed a 500-acre tract on Waldron Island and participated in the initiation of the local electric cooperative in the early 20th century which is now known as OPALCO (Orcas Power and Light Cooperative).

Henry Cayou was elected to the San Juan County Council, where he served 29 years and was chair when Friday Harbor was incorporated. He is the only Native American to have been elected to this county’s board or council. Henry Cayou moved easily through both the Native American and white cultures and can be seen as a bridge between these cultures.

Justification of Proposed Name

What is the usage of this feature?

This channel is used by vessels including Washington State Ferries, other commercial craft including fishing boats and whale watching tours, recreational vessels, and residential houses also overlook this waterway.
Safety was a concern; the applicant Ken Carrasco, a US Coast Guard veteran who currently holds a captain’s license, was initially concerned about potential navigational confusion during the interim period while the new name becomes commonplace. However, two unequivocal and very obvious navigational points of reference – the state ferry landings – lie within this channel, are well-marked on charts, well-lit at night, and are commonly referred to while navigating.

Please state why the proposed name will best serve the public interest:
The proposed new name of Cayou Channel will finally give wide recognition to a life-long resident who was instrumental in shaping the economic and political framework of our county including the infrastructure we depend upon and enjoy today. Again, he was a bridge between the indigenous and white cultures, and adopting his name will honor the First Peoples who lived in harmony with the natural world for millennia before us.

How long has the proposed name been in use? By whom?
The term “Cayou” has not yet been applied in any way to this channel. Otherwise, in the region the name Cayou is currently applied only to a small commercial marina in Deer Harbor near the location of his former fish processing plant and to a tiny island off Decatur Island in southern Lopez Sound. Cayou Island is only about one acre in size and lies between Rim and Ram Islands at the western entrance of Lopez Pass near the former location of “Reed and Cayou” [Boatyard]. The story of why this island was so named has apparently been lost to history.

We feel the marina and island are sufficiently distant from the channel and are of such different types of landmarks that they would not be confused.

List all sources of information used for your research, including background history:
Should our application be passed through your Initial Consideration phase, we will formally list a bibliography.

The source of information regarding General William S. Harney is plentiful; he has his own page on Wikipedia, a Ph.D. dissertation was written about his life which was ultimately published as a popular book (the reference of George Rollie Adams mentioned above), and multiple Army records exist. In addition, there are multiple smaller references to his life – even highway markers in Nebraska noting the location of the Battle of Ash Hollow.

The sources of information on Henry Cayou are expectedly more vague but do exist. Some, however, are family sources. There are citations available at the Orcas Historical Library as well as other similar organizations. Again, we will include them in our final evaluation.

What type of support is there for the proposed name?
We are publicizing this proposal in our community through the media, both print and social, including guest columns published in the three local county newspapers.

We also initiated a petition on a commonly used website at the link change.org/renameharney, and at the time of this update we have 843 signers to the petition.
Notably, our proposal has attracted national coverage in the Native American community. The well-respected news source *Indian Country Today* has given our proposal wonderful coverage with both a 7-minute newscast and an extensive article:

The newscast starts at minute 19:00 and can be accessed at: https://indiancountrytoday.com/newscasts/mary-kim-titla-04-27-2021.

The article is located at: https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/a-bridge-between-cultures

We were interviewed on KUOW, the National Public Radio affiliate in Seattle, and are published on their podcast at https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/efforts-are-underway-to-rename-harnneychannel-near/id1044408194?i=1000518729417.

Incidentally, we were contacted by a descendent of General Harney when we first initiated this process and he apparently speaks for the family. He is very supportive of the name change as they feel he should not be honored by having a channel named for him. In 2016, Harney’s descendants, in fact, were instrumental in helping to change the name of Harney Peak in the Black Hills of South Dakota to Black Elk Peak.

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**Application submitted by:**

**Name:** Ken Carrasco (Orcas Island) and Stephanie Buffum (Shaw Island)

**Contact address:** (Ken is contact) PO Box 336  City: Orcas  State: WA  Zip: 98280

**Phone #:** (360) 820-5014  Email: acmeleaf@gmail.com  **Date of App:** Original April 15, 2021; Updated: October 15, 2021

**I am aware that all information submitted is considered to be public information.**

**Printed name:** _____Ken Carrasco_____

**Signature:** _______(signature is on original April 15 application)_______
Supplement to the Application
to the Washington State Board of Geographic Names
to rename “Harney Channel” in the San Juan Islands
to “Cayou Channel”

Ken Carrasco (Orcas Island) and Stephanie Buffum (Shaw Island), email: acmeleaf@gmail.com

Results of our petition on
Change.org as of 9/21/21
List of signers available upon request

Page:
1 Petition “Dashboard” showing 812 supporters (signers) as of September 21, 2021.
2 Initial Change.org petition, posted online April 15, 2021
4 Update to petition, posted May 5
6 Comments left by petition signers
Rename Harney Channel in the San Juan Islands

We are proposing that Harney Channel, a body of water in the San Juan Islands of Washington State, be renamed. It was originally named by the British around 1860 for General William S. Harney (1800-1889). A group of us who reside in the islands feel that General Harney does not deserve the honor because he was responsible for a number of heinous incidents to Native Americans and black people which do not reflect the values we hold today – or even at that time.

Instead, we are proposing that this water be renamed for Henry Cayou (1869-1959), who lived in the San Juan Islands through his entire life of 90 years and was a major figure in both the Native American and white communities. He was truly a bridge between cultures.

General Harney is particularly notorious for the following incidents, and we encourage you to consult Wikipedia or other online sources for more information:
- In Missouri in 1834, then-Major Harney killed a young black woman with a cane. The act, which of course would be considered murder today, was considered heinous even by 1830s standards. At that time, the Cincinnati newspaper called him “a monster!”.
- In Nebraska in 1855, Brigadier General Harney commanded about 600 soldiers in the Battle of Ash Hollow (aka Battle of Blue Water Creek and also as the Harney Massacre). Harney engineered the killing of 86 Sicangu Lakota warriors, taking their 70 women and children, many of them wounded, as prisoners. The chief of the Sicangu Lakota, Little Thunder, had tried to de-escalate the situation the night before, but Harney was adamant in his demands which led to the battle. Harney engaged the chief in false peace talks while his soldiers crept around and took
positions behind the Sicangu Lakota. Their belongings either torched or taken as souvenirs, the survivors were forced to walk 140 miles to the nearest Army fort, most of them without shoes.

As the Commanding Officer of the U.S. Army’s Department of Oregon, which included the San Juan Islands, he is widely considered to have needlessly escalated the potential for armed conflict during the so-called Pig War of 1859-60 by sending troops to the island. The Commanding General of the Army had to recall Harney from his command and bring us back from war.

In contrast, Henry Cayou was born on Orcas Island in 1869 and passed away in 1959. He is interred on Orcas Island. His father was a trapper who was a very early settler on Orcas and his mother was Lummi; her people’s point of origin story is centered on San Juan Island. Henry Cayou’s first wife was Tlingit and many Native people in our area consider him their ancestor. His relations can be found throughout the Salish Sea, including at Lummi, Swinomish, and Samish.

Cayou was a highly successful commercial fisherman (trapping and seining), was an early local maritime leader (owner of a steam tug and several fishing boats), farmed a 500-acre tract on Decatur Island, and was a co-founder of the local electric cooperative. Very notably, Henry Cayou was a member of the San Juan County Board of County Commissioners for 29 years and was chairman for a significant time on the commission. His signature is on Friday Harbor’s incorporation documents displayed in Friday Harbor Town Hall.

We realize that the renaming of a body of water can have implications to navigation, but Harney Channel, which is just two miles long and averages a half-mile wide, has other landmarks such as two state ferry landings which are routinely used by mariners as points of reference. The authority of marine charting, the Coast Pilot published by the U.S. National Ocean Survey, considers Harney Channel to be a minor passage.

A precedent for renaming a topographic feature named after Harney occurred in 2016 when Harney Peak in South Dakota’s Black Hills was renamed to Black Elk Peak by the state and federal governments in response to a proposal by local tribes and citizens.

We will be applying to the Committee of Geographic Names of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and public support is essential for adoption of a name change.

Naming landmarks and bodies of water is important for our convenience in navigation, but has also traditionally served as an opportunity to honor people, especially residents, who have had a lasting influence culturally and economically on the land and the community. The names we choose help tell the story of a place. Renaming this channel to honor Henry Cayou will satisfy this opportunity.

Thank you for signing this petition. You will be supporting our efforts to rename Harney Channel to Cayou Channel – in recognition of an Indigenous islander and 20th century fishing, maritime and political leader. Our email address is renameharneychannel@gmail.com.

~ end of initial petition ~
PETITION UPDATE

The petition to rename Harney Channel to Cayou Channel has over 700 signers!

Ken Carrasco
Orcas, WA, United States


MAY 5, 2021 —
THANKS TO YOU, we now have over 700 signers to the Rename Harney petition!! And a double thank-you to those who included their reason for signing. We are already aware of opposition to this proposal so support from each and every one of you is crucial!

Media coverage has been wonderful, including from the indigenous communities. Indian County Today, the preeminent national First Nations news source, has given us tremendous coverage with both a 7-minute newscast and an extensive article:

Newscast, starting at minute 19:00:  https://indiancountrytoday.com/newscasts/mary-kim-titla-04-27-2021

Online story:  https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/a-bridge-between-cultures

In addition, our story has run in all three of the local newspapers in San Juan County.

We also have a Facebook page, Cayou Channel. Please “like” us so you can keep up with our progress with this proposal.

We have already been communicating with the staff at the State of Washington responsible for the geographic names process and they are encouraging. They told us that we are going about this renaming process in the right way. The committee may be meeting in June and, thanks to your signatures, we will be ready.

Thanks again for your support, and please help spreading the word about this proposal! The website, again, is: change.org/renameharney

By the way, we have more information about Harney’s conduct as commander at the Battle of Ash Hollow against the Sioux (pictured here in a public domain drawing). And, although it’s behind a paywall, the Omaha-Herald ran an extensive article on July 21, 2017 about the battle. Finally, we see that the Ellsworth American on July 15, 1855, quoted the Boston Journal about that battle which General Harney commanded:

“... a cold-blooded massacre, in which the rule of civilized warfare was disregarded, and in which every sentiment of honor and humanity were outraged. The course pursued by General Harney, in abusing the flag of truce, seems to us as treacherous and as criminal as that of the pirate on the ocean, who displays a friendly flag until he has lured his unsuspecting victim within his reach, and then runs up the skull and cross bones, and pours forth his death dealing broadsides.”

~ end of update ~
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City</th>
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<th>Commented Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brenda Asterino</td>
<td>LOPEZ ISLAND</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-17</td>
<td>&quot;Yes, This water should be renamed after Henry Cayou who helped bridge communities.&quot;</td>
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<td>jim glozier</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>60622</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-18</td>
<td>&quot;Though I the FB icon attached to my name say's Chicago, I have lived on Orcas Island for nine years now. I agree that the name should be changed.&quot;</td>
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<td>Gene Helfman</td>
<td>Lopez Island</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-18</td>
<td>&quot;long overdue.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mariann Carrasco</td>
<td>Orcas</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98280</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-18</td>
<td>&quot;About time!!!&quot;</td>
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<td>Sam Barr</td>
<td>Anacortes</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98221</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-18</td>
<td>&quot;This honors a more holistic historical representation of this place&quot;</td>
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<td>Janet Alderton</td>
<td>Deer Harbor</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98243</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-19</td>
<td>&quot;Harney's awful legacy is a disgrace. Honoring Henry Cayou is a wonderful plan!&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janice Williams</td>
<td>Eastsound</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98245</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-19</td>
<td>&quot;Representation in names are the underlining pulse of the public. Let's right this wrong.&quot;</td>
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<td>Paul Henriksen</td>
<td>Lopez Island</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-19</td>
<td>&quot;Henry Cayou should be honored and Harney should not.&quot;</td>
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<td>Scott Pinegar</td>
<td>Lopez Island</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-19</td>
<td>&quot;Compelling rationale for honoring Cayou and consigning Harney to ignominy.&quot;</td>
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<td>Jess Newley</td>
<td>Friday Harbor</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98250</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-19</td>
<td>&quot;Names are important!&quot;</td>
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<td>Becky Borgquist</td>
<td>Friday Harbor</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98250</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-19</td>
<td>&quot;Becky borgquist&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>cathie soderman</td>
<td>Boulder</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>80301</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-20</td>
<td>&quot;My husband Paul is a descendant of General Harney and we do not support Harney’s name being on this Channel. He is an oppressor, the waterway should be given a name of an honorable person, like Cayou!&quot;</td>
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<td>Jennifer King</td>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98006</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-20</td>
<td>&quot;It matters who we honor with place names.&quot;</td>
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<td>Jim Foley</td>
<td></td>
<td>US</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2021-04-20</td>
<td>&quot;It’s the Right Thing to do.&quot;</td>
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<td>Michelle Collyer</td>
<td>Lopez Island</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-20</td>
<td>&quot;We have a duty to erase the names of white supremacists.&quot;</td>
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<td>Todd Shuster</td>
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<td>US</td>
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<td>2021-04-20</td>
<td>&quot;It is the right thing to do! Honor those that deserve it.&quot;</td>
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<td>Iris Graville</td>
<td>Lopez Island</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-20</td>
<td>&quot;I signed because it’s a small step toward healing relationships with indigenous peoples.&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan Marshall</td>
<td>South Pasadena</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>91030</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot;I’m to be a full-time resident of Lopez Island next month (May 2021). I grew up in Omaha, NE and there was a Harney Street that I see was named for William S. Harney. In reading about his background, it was very ugly, especially in regards to Native Americans. I think this is an excellent idea to rename this channel after someone who was a &quot;bridge&quot; between peoples.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Bryant</td>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>97213</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot;No place on Earth should bear that Monster’s name!! If he had succeeded our Islands would be covered in military graveyards instead of the tale of how two Great Countries can resolve a dispute...even one as large as the boundary which decided who owned these Islands...WITHOUT the loss of a single Human Life! All disputes should be settled like this...in International arbitration instead of bloodshed．殺戮．“</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robbie Raker</td>
<td>Katy</td>
<td>TX</td>
<td>77450</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot;Changing the name of this body of water to honor a local resident who represented Native American and white...&quot;</td>
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<td>Jamie Schwindt</td>
<td>Bellingham, WA</td>
<td>98225</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot;It's above time!&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elinor Howell</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
<td>97202</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot;Special places such as this deserve to be named after local heroes, not foreign conquerors.&quot;</td>
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<td>Allegra Sloman</td>
<td>Burnaby, V5E, Canada</td>
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<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot;All place names should be relocalized.&quot;</td>
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<td>Dawni Williams</td>
<td>Anacortes, WA</td>
<td>98221</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clayton Cromley</td>
<td>Littleton, CO</td>
<td>80127</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-21</td>
<td>&quot;Spent formative years in Washington and would like future kids to grow up in a place that acknowledges better angels from its past&quot;</td>
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<td>Simone Lee Bar</td>
<td>Calgary, T2K</td>
<td>98104</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2021-04-22</td>
<td>&quot;Names and maps are powerful!&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barb Chamberlain</td>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td>98047</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-22</td>
<td>&quot;I have family in Friday Harbor and go to the islands often. As a resident of Washington I hope we can begin to recognize and undo the harms of settler colonialism. Names on the land reflect stories; let them be ones that honor people who lifted us up, not those who destroyed.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Joshua Putnam</td>
<td>Pacific, WA</td>
<td>98250</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-22</td>
<td>&quot;The power to name our lands and seas should be used to uplift historical exemplars of the core values of democratic society. This change does exactly that.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa Mizla</td>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td>98112</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-22</td>
<td>&quot;History matters.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis King</td>
<td>Brooklyn, NY</td>
<td>11222</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-22</td>
<td>&quot;This needs to change! Name it after a local Native community member instead of a murderous White Man!&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Robison</td>
<td>Friday Harbor, WA</td>
<td>98250</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-23</td>
<td>&quot;We should be honoring those who raise up our entire community.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin McCoy</td>
<td>Olga, WA</td>
<td>98279</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-23</td>
<td>&quot;Very Appropriate&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ria Harboe Lumu</td>
<td>Lummi Island, WA</td>
<td>98262</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-23</td>
<td>&quot;This is the right thing to do. Our family has lived along this channel for almost 40 years and I've never known this about Mr. Harney. Thanks Ken, for bringing this to our attention! This should be happening everywhere!&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Lake</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>19127</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-23</td>
<td>&quot;It is imperative that our naming conventions honor those who love the land and who are themselves honorable. Harney doesn't deserve anything named after him.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamela Loew Eastsound</td>
<td>WA</td>
<td>98245</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-24</td>
<td>&quot;Henry Cayou is a much better representative of our area.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Self</td>
<td>Raleigh, NC</td>
<td>27612</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-25</td>
<td>&quot;My parents have lived on Orcas for many years and our extended family spends much time there. I would love to see this honor for such a positive contributor to the region.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Es Warwick</td>
<td>Victoria, V8T</td>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2021-04-26</td>
<td>&quot;This would be what reconciliation looks like. Do the right thing.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annette Garver</td>
<td>Greenville, SC</td>
<td>29601</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-26</td>
<td>&quot;I lived for 20 summers on Orcas Island and it is still a place with means peace to me. I never knew when passing through that channel on the ferry countless times, that it was named for such an unworthy person. To me, it will be Cayou Channel from now on.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mollie Shea</td>
<td>Bend, OR</td>
<td>97702</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-26</td>
<td>&quot;Honoring people who have intentionally done great harm to others, by naming features of nature after them, is a cruel way of continually inflicting excruciatingly painful memories for generations of ancestors while at the same time inferring brutal domination tactics are to be rewarded. Honoring people who have consistently gone out of their way to help fellow brothers and sisters, to stand peaceably for justice, and to care for the communities, over someone of with such a horrible legacy, is a no brainer. Please make the change.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a collection of comments from various individuals regarding the renaming of places to honor historical exemplars of democratic society and to undo the harms of settler colonialism.

The comments emphasize the importance of naming conventions that recognize the contributions of those who have lifted us up, rather than those who have destroyed. The respondents advocate for the use of names and maps to uplift historical exemplars of democratic values, reflecting stories that honor people who have consistently gone out of their way to help fellow brothers and sisters, stand peaceably for justice, and care for the communities.

These comments reflect a collective effort to acknowledge and relocalize place names, highlighting the significance of reconciliation and the power of naming conventions to uplift the stories of those who have consistently contributed to a democratic society.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luke Newton</td>
<td>Oakland, CA</td>
<td>94612</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-27</td>
<td>&quot;My family lives near this soon to be named cayou channel on Orcas Island and this renaming must happen. I wish there were a record of what the original Coast Salish place name for this channel is, along with the many islands and waters throughout the region. This renaming should also be seen as just one small step towards supporting reconciliation, reparation and Indigenous rights in these Coast Salish territories.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne Roundy</td>
<td>Lopez Island, WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-27</td>
<td>&quot;As a San Juan Islands resident and boater I strongly support the renaming of Harney Channel to Cayou Channel. General Harney’s actions against black and indigenous people as well as during the Pig War were despicable. It is time for us to learn about Henry Cayou and to honor him. His life is representative of the spirit of these islands.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margot Shaw</td>
<td>Eastsound, WA</td>
<td>98245</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-04-30</td>
<td>&quot;I agree with having names connected with those who lived here&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Schafer</td>
<td>West Seattle, WA</td>
<td>98107</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-01</td>
<td>&quot;Nancy Schafer. Even small changes can have an accumulative positive cultural effect. I believe re-examining our history is so important for the future we want to have.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirman Taylor</td>
<td>Lopez Island, WA</td>
<td>98261</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-01</td>
<td>&quot;It’s the right think to do.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christy Bear</td>
<td>Bellevue, WA</td>
<td>98007</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-03</td>
<td>&quot;The honor of having a geographic place named after you should go to people who exemplify humanity at its best - it’s time to rename Harney Channel!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oolaa Kaplan</td>
<td>Bellevue, WA</td>
<td>98008</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-03</td>
<td>&quot;Make this right! Change the name.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arriba Stature</td>
<td>North Bend, WA</td>
<td>98045</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-03</td>
<td>&quot;We need to stop rewarding racism and cruelty in our country.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvonne Brandon</td>
<td>Redmond, WA</td>
<td>98052</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-04</td>
<td>&quot;Harney does not deserve this honor.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL HIGGINS</td>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td>98118</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-14</td>
<td>&quot;Cayou seems much better.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denny Redman</td>
<td>Duvall, WA</td>
<td>98019</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>2021-05-17</td>
<td>&quot;I’m signing because I agree that it was named originally for someone who does not share current human values.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pacific Northwest islanders want to dump the name of a notorious general and rename a Salish Sea channel for a 20th century Native leader

Richard Arlin Walker
*Special to Indian Country Today*

A channel of water in an archipelago north of Puget Sound carries the name of 19th century U.S. Army Gen. William S. Harney, notorious for whipping to death a Black woman in Missouri, leading the killing of Sicangu Lakota men, women and children in Nebraska, and taking the U.S. to the brink of armed conflict with Great Britain over a jurisdictional dispute in the Pacific Northwest.

If a proposal is approved by the Washington state Board of Geographic Names, however, the channel would be renamed in honor of Henry Cayou, a fishing, maritime and political leader of Lummi and Saanich First Nation ancestry.
The channel is located east of Canada's Vancouver Island, between Orcas and Shaw islands in San Juan County, Washington – a point of origin for several Coast Salish peoples, including the Lhaq’temish, or Lummi.

Cayou, who died in 1959, was a successful commercial fisherman who to this day is the only Indigenous islander elected to the county’s Board of County Commissioners, on which he served for nearly three decades. He also served as a postmaster, helped found the islands’ electrical utility, and served as a regional representative of Chemawa Indian School.

It would be the second significant name change in the islands in recent years. Residents successfully petitioned the state in 2017 to change the name of Squaw Bay on Shaw Island to Reef Net Bay, a reference to the type of Native fishing that is still conducted there. And a county agency’s Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is determining if other name changes are needed.

Ken Carrasco, a retired fisheries biologist who lives on Harney Channel, said he was spurred to propose the name change after reading histories about Harney, who died in 1889.

A further examination revealed Harney spent little time in the San Juan Islands, and an individual’s long association with a place is one of the criteria for the naming of a landmark or body of water.

“We don’t have statues here, but we do name landmarks and bodies of water after people of note who have had a great influence upon our lives — people we still hold as models for our younger people and for society in general,” Carrasco said.

“General Harney fails to meet that expectation, that standard of someone we want our lives to emulate. Henry Cayou, from everything I’ve heard, exemplifies the type of person that we can hold as a person to value.”

Carrasco and Stephanie Buffum of Shaw Island said they will post a petition on Change.org and submit a name-change application in April to the state Committee on Geographic Names. The committee will decide whether to recommend the change to the state Board on Geographic Names.

Among the early supporters of the proposal are former Lummi Nation Chairman Jay Julius; former Lummi Nation Councilman Freddie Sul ka dub’ Lane; Rosie Cayou James, a Samish cultural educator and Cayou’s grand-niece; former state Sen. Kevin Ranker, D-Orcas Island; and several members of the Mitchell Bay Band, descendants of Indigenous people who chose to remain on the islands and not relocate to reservations after the treaty was signed in 1855.

A sacred place

The San Juan Islands sit in the center of the Salish Sea, between Vancouver Island to the west, the Strait of Georgia to the north, mainland Washington state to the east, and the Olympic Peninsula to the south. To the southeast is Admiralty Inlet, the entrance to Puget Sound. The largest islands in the archipelago are San Juan, Orcas, Lopez and Shaw.
The archipelago is a sacred place to the Lummi, Samish, Saanich and Songhees peoples. Their histories say it was on San Juan Island that their common ancestor — *sweh-tuhh*, the First Man — appeared. It was here that the Creator gave the people reef netting, a type of salmon fishing unique to the San Juan Islands.

The islands were the center of a vast Indigenous economic and kinship network when the British and the Americans laid claim in the 1840s. For centuries, Indigenous families traveled to and from the islands in skillfully carved cedar canoes to visit relatives, attend longhouse ceremonies, harvest resources and engage in trade.

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Much of that world was changing when Henry Cayou was born in 1869 on Orcas Island. He was one of more than 10 children born to Louis and Mary Ann Cayou. His mother was Lummi and Saanich; his father was a Kentucky-born farmer and lumberman whose ancestors hailed from France.

Harney Channel was already identified as such on navigational charts when Cayou was born, reportedly so-named for Harney because he was serving at the time as a brigadier general in command of the U.S. Army's Department of Oregon, which included Washington Territory. In an interesting twist, one of Cayou's younger brothers would be named General Scott Cayou, in honor of U.S. Army General Winfield Scott, who in 1859 defused the tensions started by Harney and established the peaceful joint military occupation of the islands until the territory dispute could be resolved.

When Cayou was born, British Royal Marines and U.S. Army troops were encamped on San Juan Island, awaiting settlement of the dispute. The prairies that had been maintained for centuries for the cultivation of food plants were being used by newcomers for livestock grazing. Limestone was being quarried to supply critical building material. Cedars that provided wood for longhouses and hand-carved canoes, as well as fiber for clothing and ceremonial items, were being felled to feed a growing hunger for quality lumber.

Then, in 1872, when Cayou was 3, an arbitration panel led by Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany settled the territory dispute in favor of the United States. The British Royal Marines left the island and their encampment — the former Coast Salish community of Pe'pi'ow'elh — was made available for homesteading.

In the ensuing years, young Henry Cayou learned to navigate life in two worlds. He learned to fish the traditional way from his Lummi stepfather, Pe Ell, played baseball for a team composed of Native Americans on Orcas Island, married a woman from the family of Sheiyksh (pronounced Shakes), a line of hereditary Tlingit leaders, and served as the islands' point of contact for the Chemawa Indian School.
Cayou used his Indigenous knowledge and business acumen to prosper in the new economy, taking each stroke of fortune and further investing it. He became a successful fish trapper and seiner. In 1895, he invested in his brothers-in-law’s shipyard and over time built a fleet of fishing boats and tugs.

By 1897, he was serving as a county road supervisor on Orcas Island. In 1902, he established a 500-acre farm on Decatur Island and was appointed the island’s postmaster. In 1906, he was elected to his first of several terms on the San Juan County Board of County Commissioners. In 1907, he was elected president of the San Juan County Fruit Growers Association.

One of Cayou’s most significant legacies is one felt today each time an islander turns the lights on — the co-founding in 1937 of Orcas Power Co., the islands’ electrical utility now known as Orcas Power and Light Cooperative.

While he walked in two worlds — elected to county office before enrolled Natives had the right to vote — he never gave up his Coast Salish identity. He was listed as “Indian” on the 1910 U.S. Census and in 1919 was included in a federal census of unenrolled Indians in Washington state.

In the 1919 census, Cayou was listed as a member of the “Mitchell Bay Tribe,” a descriptor used by Office of Indian Affairs agent Charles Roblin for those who, after the treaty was signed, had chosen to stay on the islands rather than move to reservations. Most if not all of those listed, including Cayou, had ancestral or familial ties to the historical Indigenous community at Mitchell Bay. Some of Cayou’s siblings moved to reservations, however, and several of his nephews and nieces served in elective office in the Swinomish Tribe.

Carrasco said Cayou “was a bridge between cultures during a transformative time for the islands.”

Buffum, former longtime executive director of a nonprofit environmental protection organization on the islands, agreed.

She said Cayou — successful in county politics, maritime and fishing — “represents so much of what this body of water represents to people here in the San Juan Islands.”

Renaming would be ‘a just act’

Place names in the Salish Sea historically told the story of a site’s significance — a village location, the best place to harvest certain resources, the animals most common to an area, or a gateway to another geographical location.

Buffum said renaming Harney Channel to Cayou Channel would be “a just act that would carry an appropriate history of this place to future generations and honor a person worthy of emulation by future generations.”

Local historians agree.
“Henry Cayou was a major figure in the San Juan Islands and he was Native American,” said Mike Vouri, an author and retired historian for the National Park Service. “There is a dearth of Native American names [of features] in the islands and that needs to change.”

He added, “Place names reflect the values we have. If we can take these collective waters — Haro Strait, Rosario Strait, the Strait of Georgia, the Strait of Juan de Fuca — and in 2010 name them the Salish Sea after the great Coast Salish people, there’s no reason why we shouldn’t look at other Native names that have meaning to us.”

Kevin Loftus, executive director of the San Juan Historical Society and Museum, said renaming the channel after Cayou “makes a lot of sense.”

“Names impart a historical tie-in and give us a better understanding [of a place] than something neutral,” he said. “We have road names here that tell us something about the families that lived here. Spring Street tells us there was a spring there and, though it’s now underground, it’s still there.

A place that carries the name of an individual, he said, “makes me curious as to who this person was, what they did, what kind of contributions they made to the islands.”
Currently name Harney Channel, the proponent wishes to honor Henry Cayou.

Mr. Cayou was a prominent member of the commercial fishing industry and processing plant in Deer Harbor and farmed on Decatur Island. It is presumed that Mr. Henry regularly transmitted this particular channel.
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