



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Interior Region 1- National Capital Area
1100 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

JUN 07 2021

IN REPLY REFER TO:

6.A.1 (NCA-ROCR)

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Delegate Norton:

Thank you for your letter of February 23, 2021, urging the National Park Service (NPS) to rename Melvin Hazen Park. I am also aware that DC Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F passed a resolution on November 17, 2020, which requested that the NPS change the name of the park and its associated tributary.

On May 20, 1942, NPS National Capital Parks Assistant Superintendent Frank T. Gartside administratively named the site "Melvin Hazen Park" in response to a recommendation by the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Prior to that time, the site was known as Bureau of Standards Valley. This action memorialized Melvin Hazen, former DC Surveyor and President of the DC Board of Commissioners, who had recently died. However, Mr. Hazen's legacy includes the pursuit of policies that resulted in the displacement of Black residents in Washington, DC, particularly in the area known as Reno City.

While the stream is commonly referred to as Melvin Hazen Stream, we have confirmed with the US Board of Geographic Names (Board), that the stream has no official name. The creek is a geographic feature and the Board would oversee a proposed official naming. The NPS will explore whether we have the authority to modify the name of the park.

At this point I can tell you that we have begun the internal exploration and discussions that are necessary to consider such a change for the park. Please understand that this is not just a matter of legal authority, but also one of mission, policy, and practice, and it may take some period of time in order to reach a conclusion.

I will be in touch as soon as more information becomes available.

Sincerely,

Kym A. Hall
Area Director
Region 1 – National Capital Area

INTERIOR REGION 1 • NORTH ATLANTIC-APPALACHIAN

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