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Pending Virginia Place Name Proposal before the Domestic Names Committee, USBGN

Montvalon: populated place (unincorporated); located 9 mi. NW of Dillwyn; the name refers to “mountains and valleys”; Buckingham County, Virginia; 37°39’02”N, 78°32’45”W; USGS map – Glenmore 1:24,000. https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/gazvector.getesricoor?p_lat=37.65053&p_longi=-78.54576

Proposal: new name for unnamed feature

Map: USGS Glenmore 1:24,000

Proponent: Keith Plass; Dillywn, VA Administrative area: None

Previous BGN Action: None

Names associated with feature:

GNIS: No record

Local Usage: Montvalon (St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary community, 5 years)

Published: None found

Case Summary: The new name Montvalon is proposed for an unincorporated community in Buckingham County, approximately nine miles northwest of the Town of Dillwyn. The proponent states that the name means “mountain and valley” and that it “fits in with the cultured name system of this area, that began with Thomas Jefferson.”

The proponent reports that “[t]he area in question is the property of a religious organization well-known in the area [St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary]. The community here and some locals have frequently referred to this property as ‘Montvalon’ for over five years. The local people either have no objections to naming the area, or see the advantage of it.” He further describes the area as follows:

“... [it is] permanently occupied by a unique and large religious community. Since 2016, this community centers in buildings of striking architecture on a prominent hill. From this hill, there is one of the best views of the blue ridge mountains [sic] in the area. Much local commerce passes through this property: food, postal, construction, woodworking, agriculture. 120 students reside here, plus staff, support teams, and a community of religious sisters. There also is large farm (cattle, pigs, and chickens), orchard, and garden on the property. It is a unique phenomenon in the area and offers tours regularly.”

The proponent has indicated that the seminary would like the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to establish Montvalon as a new last line (city) name. They currently have a mailing address of Dillwyn. USPS regulations require that any new city name must first be approved by the BGN. A map provided by the proponent that outlines the extent of the proposed community shows that it lies within at least two USPS ZIP codes. The area appears to comprise only the current and future grounds of the seminary, while most of the surrounding area is an undeveloped logging area.

GNIS lists an unincorporated populated place with the name Montvale 68 miles to the west-southwest in Bedford County.

Source: Quarterly Review List 442 Released December 30, 2020 (<https://www.usgs.gov/us-board-on-geographic-names/dnc-review-lists>)