

Indian Names and Places

Coos: The name of the largest and northernmost county in NH comes from the Abenaki word 'coo-ash' meaning "pines". Living in the area was a tribe known as the 'Cooash-aukes' meaning "dwellers in the place of the pines".

Connecticut: The Connecticut River separates the states of New Hampshire and Vermont, flows south through Massachusetts and Connecticut into the Long Island Sound, 407 miles. 'Counitegou' as the Indians spelled it means "the long river". Though different tribes along the river spelled and pronounced it differently, all dialects sounded like Connecticut. Between Pittsburg, NH and the Canadian border are three lakes and a state park also called Connecticut.

Kancamagus: A mountain and scenic highway were named in 1876 for this warrior who became Chief in 1685 and led the Pennacooks in their last uprising against the white settlers. The highway is NH 112 running from Lincoln to Conway. The mountain is found in the area of Mt. Osceola in Waterville Valley.

Kearsage: Two mountains bear this name, one north of Conway and one in Warner. There are many variations on the meaning of this word. 'Kees auke' is one Abenaki version meaning 'high place' other variations are 'pointed mountain', 'land is harsh, rough, difficult', and 'notch-pointed mountain of pines' to name just a few.

Magalloway: The mountain of this name is located east of the First Connecticut Lake and overlooks the Middle Branch of the Dead Diamond River while the river flows out of Umbagog Lake. Its name means 'the shoveler', referring to the caribou's shoveling snow with their hooves to find food.

Mahoosuc: To the Abenaki Indians, Mahoosuc meant "abode of hungry animals" while to the Natick Indians it meant "pinnacle" or "mountain peak". The Mahoosuc Range runs from Lake Umbagog to Gorham to Bethel, Maine.

Metallak: An island located well out in the waters of the big Umbagog Lake with the New Hampshire/Maine border running through its center carried the name of the last chief of the Coo-ash-auke Tribe. Metallak, known as "The Lone Indian of the Magalloway" lived from 1740 to 1847 and is buried near Stewartstown.

Mollidoewock: This name has found its way into many different areas each with a different spelling but all referring to Molly Ocket, the Pequaket wife of the Coo-ash-auke Indian chief, Metallak, who traveled the White Mountains around 1800. This spelling refers to the stream located in Errol; Mollockett Brook can be found in Berlin; while Molly Lockett Cave is near Fryeburg, Maine. Molls Rock near the outlet of Umbagog Lake is one of three possible sites where Molly is buried.

Moosilauke: The most common meaning of 'moosi' and 'auke' is 'bald place'. This mountain is the farthest west of peaks between Franconia Notch and the Connecticut River.

Osceola: The Seminole word 'asi-yaholo' means "black drink". This mountain is the highest peak in Waterville Valley and was named for the great chief Of the Seminoles.

Pebomauk: "Wintry place" or "winters home" describes this Abenaki Indian word. The loop and falls of this name can be found in Randolph on the southeast side of Crescent Range between Mt. Crescent and Black Crescent near ice Gulch.

Pequawket: A pond two miles west of Conway bears this name of the Indian Tribe 'pe-que-auk-et', meaning "broken land" or "clear valley lands bordering a crooked stream". It was also an early name of Conway.

Sachem: This peak's name means "Chief" in Abenaki dialect. It is the highest peak in the Aceton Ridge which from Jennings Peak over Sachem Peak to Bald Knob In Waterville Valley.

Siwooganock: "Place we return in the spring time" describes this word which the Indians called the Israel River in Lancaster.

Skookumchuck: The Chinook Indians meaning of this was "dashing water" or "rapids". The trail by this name is on the north ridge of Mt. Lafayette in Franconia Notch State Park which crosses Skookumchuck Brook on the way.

Umbagog: Located near Errol, NH is another lake which straddles the New Hampshire/Maine border. Called 'wambighe' by the Abenaki tribe, it means "clear lake" or "clear water".

Waternomee: Once known as Blue Mt., this peak located south of Kinsman Notch in the Moosilauke Range, bears the name of an Indian killed in a massacre in the spring of 1712 led by Lt. Thomas Baker at what is now known as Baker's River.

Waumbek: In some dialects 'waumbekket-methna' means "snowy mountains" while the Algonquin 'waumbik' means "white rocks". Mt. Waumbek at 4,005 feet is the highest point in the Pliny Range extending north and south between the Israel and Upper Ammonoosuc Rivers east of Lancaster.

Weetamoo: Being the daughter of the Pennacook Chief, Passaconaway, Weetamoo was the 'suncksqua' or "'queen". Named for her are falls in the Great Gulf, a trail and rock in the Chocorua Range, and a mountain in the Sandwich Range. The Six Husbands Trail in the Great Gulf refers to the number of her spouses.

Winnepesauke: The name of the largest lake in New Hampshire found in the Laconia area translates to "smile of the Great Spirit".

Wonalanet: Meaning "governor", Wonalancet was the Pennacook Indian Chief from 1660-1685 and the son of Passaconaway. There are a village, river, mountain, and range bearing this name in the Waterville Valley area.