Change Negro Ben Mountain to Ben Johnson Mountain: summit; elevation 4,935 ft.; on Bureau of Land Management land 14 mi. SW of Medford; named for Benjamin Johnson, a blacksmith who lived near the base of the mountain in the late 19th century; Secs 6,5,8&7, T39S, R3W, Willamette Meridian; Jackson County, Oregon; 42°12′16″N, 123°05′36″W; USGS map – Ruch 1:24,000; Not: Negro Ben Mountain, Nigger Ben Mountain.

https://geonames.usgs.gov/apex/gazvector.getesrimap?p_lat=42.2044906&p_longi=-123.0933797&fid=1146832
Proposal: to change a name considered offensive
Map: USGS Ruch 1:24,000
Proponent: Margo Schembre; Wilsonville, OR
Administrative area: Bureau of Land Management land
Previous BGN Action: Negro Ben Mountain (BGN 1964)
Names associated with feature:
GNIS: Negro Ben Mountain (FID 1146832)
Local Usage: None found
Case Summary: This proposal is to change the name of Negro Ben Mountain, located on Bureau of Land Management land in Jackson County, to Ben Johnson Mountain. The proponent states that the summit was named for Ben Johnson, a local blacksmith: “We know his last name, it’s appropriate and respectful, in 2019, to call it Ben Johnson Mountain and not ‘Negro Ben.’”
The summit was first labeled on USGS topographic maps in 1921 with the pejorative form of the name. On the 1956 edition, the name was changed to Negro Ben Mountain but was changed back to the pejorative form on the 1960 edition. In 1964, the BGN established the name Negro Ben Mountain “to conform with the BGN’s policy.”
Until the 2000s, the last name of “Ben” was unknown. Lewis McArthur, in his volume Oregon Geographic Names, wrote “The name was very old and appears to have been derived from a man named Ben who operated a small blacksmith shop near the [Applegate] river and accommodated miners by sharpening picks and other tools. . . Ben’s last name appears to have been lost to posterity.” Rush and the Upper Applegate Valley, published in 1990, reported that “Ben” was a blacksmith in the small town of Uniontown, which no longer exists but which was located at the base of the mountain.
In 2003, Jan Wright, a historian for the Southern Oregon Historical Society, discovered that a man named Benjamin Johnson was listed as “colored” in the 1868 and 1869 assessment rolls for Jackson County, and living in Uniontown. In the 1870 and 1880 censuses of Albany in Lynn County, Johnson and his wife were listed as “mulatto.” The details were published in a 2003 Medford Mail Tribune article and two years later in Southern Oregon History Today. The Applegater, a local community news magazine, has published pictures of Benjamin Johnson’s cabin at the base of the mountain. A road that circles the mountain is named Negro Ben Road.
As part of its research, the OGNB contacted the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, which responded that it had no opinion on the matter.