Place Name Origins

**Places Named After Natural Features**

**Cape Foulweather** is the place (and weather) of Captain Cook’s first landfall in Oregon  
**Cascade Range** was named after the rapids in the Columbia River  
**The Dalles** means “flagstones” in French, and refers to a narrow river bordered by flat ledges  
**Sandy River** is short “Quicksand River”, named by Lewis and Clark  
**Strawberry Mountains** are named for the wild strawberries found in the area  
**Deschutes River** means “falls” in French and refers to Celilo Falls on the Columbia River  
**Warm Springs** is named for the local natural springs

**Places Named for Explorers and Immigrant Settlers**

**Hillsboro** is named after Oregon’s first elected governor, David Hill  
**Three Sisters** mountains were originally called Faith, Hope, and Charity by missionaries  
**Hell’s Canyon** in the Snake River gorge was named to promote tourism  
**Columbia River** was named by Captain Robert Gray after his ship, the “Columbia Rediviva”, with first entered the river in 1792

**Beaverton** is named for the abundance of beavers that originally inhabited the wetlands of this agricultural region  
**Burns** is named for the Scottish poet Robert Burns  
**Hood River and Mt. Hood** are named for Samuel Hood, a member of Captain Vancouver’s expedition  
**Corvallis** is Latin for “heart of the valley”  
**Steens Mountain** is named for the army major who fought the Paiutes in the region in 1860  
**Summer Lake** was named by Captain Fremont to contrast with nearby Winter Ridge  
**Enterprise** was named by the town’s first, and optimistic, residents  
**Rogue River** was first called Woodville, but was changed to better advertise the town

**Places with Native American Names**

**Tillamook** is the name of a Salish tribe  
**Multnomah** is the Chinook name for the Willamette River  
**Wallowa Mountains** refers to a Nez Perce word for a type of fish trap  
**Siskiyou Mountains** is a Cree word for “spotted horse” which a fur trader lost in a snowstorm in the mountains  
**Siletz River** refers to a local Native American word for black bear  
**Umpqua River** is a Native American word for the area around that river  
**Coos Bay** was named after the Cook-koo-oose tribe  
**Harney Lake** is named after a Brigadier General William Harney  
**Owyhee River** is named for Hawaiian fur trappers killed nearby  
**Malheur River** Means “misfortune” in French and refers to thefts of furs that hunters experienced in the area  
**Astoria** is named for John Jacob Astor whose fur company had a trading post there