

petition TTB to establish a grape-growing region as a viticultural area. The petition must include—

- Evidence that the proposed viticultural area is locally and/or nationally known by the name specified in the petition;
- Historical or current evidence that the boundaries of the proposed viticultural area are as specified in the petition;
- Evidence that the proposed area's growing conditions, such as climate, soils, elevation, physical features, etc., distinguish it from surrounding areas;
- A description of the proposed viticultural area's specific boundaries, based on features found on maps approved by the United States Geological Survey (USGS); and
- A copy of the appropriate USGS-approved map(s) with the boundaries prominently marked.

Impact on Current Wine Labels

Under our 27 CFR part 4 regulations, viticultural area names have geographic significance. The regulations prohibit the use of a brand name with geographic significance on a wine unless the wine meets the appellation of origin requirements for the named area. Our regulations also prohibit any other label references that suggest an origin other than the true place of origin of the wine.

If we establish this proposed viticultural area, bottlers who use brand names, including trademarks like Trinity Lakes, must ensure that their existing products are eligible to use the viticultural area's name as an appellation of origin. For a wine to be eligible, at least 85 percent of the grapes in the wine must have been grown within the viticultural area, and the wine must meet the other requirements of 27 CFR 4.25(e)(3). If a wine is not eligible for the appellation, the bottler must change the brand name or other label reference and obtain approval of a new label.

Different rules apply to wines in this category that have brand names traceable to labels approved prior to July 7, 1986. See 27 CFR 4.39(i) for details. In addition, if you use the viticultural area name on a wine label in a context other than an appellation of origin, the general prohibitions against misleading representation in 27 CFR part 4 apply.

Trinity Lakes Petition

TTB has received a petition from Keith Groves of Alpen Cellars proposing a new American viticultural area to be called "Trinity Lakes." The proposed viticultural area is in Trinity County, in northwest California. It encompasses two man-made reservoirs, Trinity Lake

and the adjoining but smaller Lewiston Lake to its south, and a portion of the Trinity River basin below Lewiston Dam. According to the petition, the proposed area covers about 96,000 acres, of which 18%, or 17,285 acres, is lake surface water, while 1.5%, or 1,440 acres, is land suitable for viticulture. Currently, 30 acres are planted vineyards. Rugged, steep, timbered ridges and narrow agricultural valleys characterize the proposed area. The lakes' daytime cooling and nighttime warming influences moderate the agricultural valleys' climate.

Name Evidence

The majority of the proposed Trinity Lakes viticultural area is located within the Trinity Lake unit of the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area. This unit includes both Trinity Lake and the smaller Lewiston Lake and, according to the petitioner, the region surrounding both lakes is commonly known as the Trinity Lakes area. The petitioner provided current photographs of road signs displaying the Trinity Lakes name as a reference for both Trinity and Lewiston Lakes. In Weaverville, Trinity Lakes Boulevard is the name used for California 3, a major highway.

A letter, dated December 13, 2002, from Mr. David Steinhäuser, president of the Trinity County Chamber of Commerce, fully supports this viticultural proposal. He writes that the name "Trinity Lakes" is used to refer to the lake areas of Trinity and Lewiston Lakes.

Created in the early 1960s, the larger man-made lake was originally named Clair Engle Lake. The petitioner states, however, that area residents have historically referred to the lake as, and prefer the name of, Trinity Lake. The petitioner notes that a grassroots movement sought to change the lake's name and mentions that Clair Engle Lake road signs often disappeared shortly after being posted. A 1997 Trinity Journal news article, included in the petition, spoke of U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer's support for the effort to have the lake re-named. Congress and the President made the change official in September 1997, with the passage and approval of Public Law 105-44, which renamed the reservoir Trinity Lake. The current California AAA road map and USGS topographic maps use the Trinity Lakes name.

Boundary Evidence

The proposed Trinity Lakes viticultural area was viticulturally developed only after the completion of the two man-made lakes in the early

1960s as the climate-moderating lake effect on the surrounding valleys provided an opportunity to grow wine grapes. The petitioner states that in 1981 a small vineyard was planted at the north end of Trinity Lake. It became a bonded winery in 1984. There are currently four vineyards, encompassing 30 acres, producing wine grapes within the proposed viticultural area.

The proposed Trinity Lakes viticultural area is in Trinity County, California. The proposed area is irregular in shape, generally running from northeast to southwest, and surrounds Trinity Lake, the smaller Lewiston Lake to the south of Trinity Dam, and a portion of the Trinity River basin downstream of Lewiston Dam. The majority of the proposed area is within the Trinity Lake unit of the Whiskeytown-Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area.

The boundary of the proposed viticultural area begins north of Carrville at Derrick Flat, runs east across the Trinity River, continues south and southwest past Trinity and Lewiston dams and the town of Lewiston, and crosses the Trinity River near the mouth of Neaman Gulch. The boundary then runs north and northeast back past the two dams and the town of Trinity Center, returning to the beginning point at Derrick Flat. A list of the approved U.S.G.S. maps, used for determining the boundary of the proposed area, is located in paragraph (b) of the proposed rule below.

The boundaries of the proposed Trinity Lakes viticultural area are discussed in detail in paragraph (c) of the proposed rule shown below in this notice.

Growing Conditions/Geographical Features

The petitioner indicates that rugged, steep, timbered ridges dropping into Trinity and Lewiston lakes and the Trinity River basin characterize the area's topography. The Bureau of Land Reclamation states that Trinity Lake's surface covers 16,535 acres while Lewiston Lake covers 750 acres, for a total of 17,285 acres of lake surface water. The filling of the lakes has left small, narrow valleys around the lakes, which are suitable for viticulture.

The large surface area of the two lakes moderates the proposed viticultural area's climate, bringing cooler days and warmer nights to the narrow valleys and the Trinity River basin. The petition cites a 70-year local resident's claim that there is less snow and sub-freezing weather and more fog than before the lakes' creation. This provides, according to the petitioner, a uniquely situated