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A rendering shows a planned high-speed rail train as it enters a station. The rendering was displayed during an informational open house by the California High-Speed Rail Authority in downtown Fresno, California, on May 1, 2024.Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy has formally terminated $4 billion in federal funding for the California High-Speed Rail Authority, weeks after putting the CHSRA's bullet train project on notice.In a termination letter to the authority's CEO, Ian Choudri, dated Wednesday, Federal Railroad Administration acting Administrator Drew Feeley wrote that the CHSRA "breached the commitments" it made in its original agreements, specifically by displaying an "inability to complete" the goals it set out to reach."After over a decade of failures, CHSRA's mismanagement and incompetence has proven it cannot build its train to nowhere on time or on budget," Duffy said in a statement. "It's time for this boondoggle to die."The railroad authority did not immediately respond to a request for comment. In a social media post, California Gov. Gavin Newsom said the state will be "exploring all options to fight this illegal action."President Donald Trump praised his administration's work in terminating the project in a Truth Social post Wednesday night, calling Newsom "incompetent.""The Railroad we were promised still does not exist, and never will," Trump wrote. "This project was Severely Overpriced, Overregulated, and NEVER DELIVERED."The high-speed rail efforts began in 2009 with the goal of building a train that could travel between Los Angeles and San Francisco in under three hours. Newsom trimmed that vision a decade later, setting out to connect just a 170-mile stretch of land between Merced and Bakersfield.The current iteration of the project was projected to cost around $22 billion, according to the Federal Railroad Administration, with a projected end date of 2033.A June report produced by the Trump administration concluded that the project had "no viable path" to completion, and alleged breaches of its federal contracts, including overdue deadlines and funding gaps.The railroad system told CNBC at the time that most of the project's funding is provided by the state, not the federal government. The Trump administration on Wednesday pulled approximately $4 billion in unspent federal funding from California's embattled high-speed rail project, calling it a "boondoggle" plagued by years of mismanagement, delays, and skyrocketing costs. U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy announced the termination of funds following a comprehensive 315-page compliance review by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) released in June. The review concluded that the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) could not meet its obligations under the federal grant agreements and has no viable plan to complete the project."This is California's fault. Governor Newsom and the complicit Democrats have enabled this waste for years. Federal dollars are not a blank check – they come with a promise to deliver results… It's time for this boondoggle to die," Duffy said.In a 22-page letter sent to the CHSRA, the FRA said the decision to terminate funding is effective immediately. The DOT said that roughly $15 billion has been spent on the project, with not a single mile of high-speed rail track laid.California Gov. Gavin Newsom sharply condemned the Trump administration's decision to revoke the funding, calling it "illegal" and a betrayal of American infrastructure in favor of foreign competitors. "Trump wants to hand China the future and abandon the Central Valley. We won't let him," Newsom said hours after Duffy's announcement.China has the largest and fastest high-speed rail system in the world. California would be the first U.S. state to have high-speed rail upon completing the project, which was initially projected to be finished by 2020.Newsom said the state is "putting all options on the table" to challenge the administration's move. Based on its compliance review, the FRA cited nine key findings, including a $7 billion funding gap to complete that Merced-Bakersfield stretch, missed procurement deadlines, and overrepresented ridership estimates. The CHSRA rejected those findings, pointing to Newsom's proposal to extend the state's Cap-and-Trade program, "which would guarantee at least $1 billion annually through 2045." The project, which he said is now entering its track-laying phase, has more than 171 miles under active construction between Merced and Bakersfield and over 50 major structures completed, including bridges and viaducts. The CHSRA estimates the full cost of the project to be $128 billion, up from an initial estimate of $33 billion.CHSRA CEO Ian Choudri echoed the governor's stance, pointing to what he described as major progress on the project."These are legally binding agreements, and the Authority has met every obligation, as confirmed by repeated federal reviews, as recently as February 2025," Choudri said. "America's only high-speed rail project underway is fast approaching the track-laying phase, with 15,500 jobs created and 60 miles of guideway already complete."Newsom said the CHSRA has completed all environmental clearances across the entire 463-mile corridor from Los Angeles to San Francisco. The Governor's Office noted other progress that included "the electrification of Caltrain complete, trainset selection underway, station and track construction on deck, [and] continued work with partner rail systems to create a southwest regional high-speed rail network.""This is no time for Washington to walk away from America's transportation future," Choudri added.Duffy also instructed the FRA to begin reviewing other state and federal funds tied to the project, including obligated and unobligated grants. Duffy said his department will consult with the Department of Justice to explore clawing back federal funds already spent and investigate any potential legal violations stemming from the CHSRA's handling of the project.Democratic leaders, including House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi and Senators Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff, have accused the Trump administration of using the review process of the high-speed rail project to punish California for political reasons. Following the compliance review, Rep. Dave Cortese (D-San Jose) called the Trump administration's intent to terminate funding "partisan theatrics" that seek to derail clean transportation. Republicans, however, welcomed the FRA's decision. Rep. Kevin Kiley (R-Rocklin) and Sen. Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield) both called for an end to the project, with taxpayer funds being redirected elsewhere."California High-Speed Rail is the worst public infrastructure disaster in U.S. history," Kiley said. "A project that was supposed to be finished five years ago at a cost of $33 billion is now projected to take until the end of the century at a cost of $130 billion. I am grateful that President Trump and Secretary Duffy are sparing our taxpayers by cutting off federal funding. The state must now follow suit, wind this disastrous project down, and spend our transportation dollars where they are needed: our roads." Politics California Trump Administration Richard Ramos Richard Ramos is a web producer for CBS Sacramento who was born and raised in Sacramento. He graduated with a BA in Journalism from CSUS. Home North America United States California California, nicknamed the Golden State, sits on the United States Western coast. It borders the states of Arizona, Nevada, and Oregon. Additionally, it extends southward to Mexico and is bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the west. In 1848, the United States acquired California from Mexico, marking the end of the Mexican-American War. It officially became the 31st state in the Union two years later in 1850. Population and Cities With a population of approximately 39 million people, California is the most populous state in the country. The capital of California, Sacramento, is situated in the northern part of the state, while Los Angeles, California's most populated city, sprawls along the southern Pacific coast. San Francisco, San Jose, San Diego, and Long Beach are also major cities. Area With a land area of 163,696 mi² (423,971 km²), California is the third largest state in the US, surpassed by only Alaska and Texas. It is roughly the same size as Sweden and four times larger than South Korea. Compared to other US States, West Virginia would fit into California nearly seven times. Regions of California Generally speaking, California can be divided into four natural regions: The Mountain Region, Coastal Region, Desert Region, and Central Valley Region. Mountain Region California boasts an abundance of mountains, with the Sierra Nevada Range spanning the California-Nevada border for 400 miles (600 kilometers). This mountain range is also home to the tallest peak in the continental United States, Mount Whitney, reaching an altitude of 14,494 ft (4,418 mt) above sea level. Additionally, Mount Lassen and Mount Shasta are notable landmarks, both of which are extinct volcanoes. Lake Tahoe, the largest alpine lake in North America, is nestled in Northern Sierra Nevada. Sequoias and Bristlecone Pines are two prominent tree species found in this region, Bristlecone Pines sometimes living to be over 4,000 years old. Coastal Region The coast is the most populated region in the state, home to approximately 68% of all Californian residents. The coastal region consists of sandy beaches, wetlands, and plains originating from various major rivers. The climate is fairly moderate, although the northern coast is slightly cooler, foggier, and rainier. Due to these higher amounts of rain, Coastal Redwoods, California's iconic conifer, flourish in this region. Sea lions, seals, otters, humpback whales, and blue whales are a few of this region's notable species. Desert Region In Southeast California, lies the desert region, comprised of three deserts: The Great Basin, Colorado, and Mojave. The landscape features parallel mountain ranges, wide valleys, canyons, plateaus, and gorges scattered throughout. Naturally, this region is extremely hot and arid, receiving a mere four to ten inches of rain each year. Temperatures soar to extraordinary heights, often surpassing 120 °F (49 °C), particularly in destinations such as Death Valley, renowned as the hottest spot on the planet. Despite the inhospitable climate, the Joshua Tree, Mojave Yucca, Prickly Pear Cactus, and Creosote Plant thrive in this region. Central Valley Region The Central Valley stretches over 400 miles, ranging from Bakersfield to Redding, with mountains bordering it on either side. The Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers drain water from the low-lying areas, dumping it into the San Francisco Bay, which ultimately prevents the valley from developing swamp-like conditions. As a result, this land is extremely fertile and the climate mild, producing one-fourth of the country's food. The central valley's notable crops include tomatoes, cereals, citrus, tree fruits, nuts, and grapes. The State of California is divided into 58 counties. In alphabetical order, these counties are: Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Los Angeles, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Riverside, Sacramento, San Benito, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Ventura, Yolo, and Yuba. With an area of 163,696 mi², California is the 3rd largest and the most populous state in the USA. Located in the north-central part of the state in the Sacramento Valley is Sacramento – the capital and the 6th largest city of California. It serves as the administrative, political, financial, educational, health-care, and tourism center of the state. It is also the cultural, and economic hub of the larger Sacramento Metropolitan Area. Situated in Southern California is Los Angeles – the largest and the most populous city in California. It is also the 2nd most populous city in the United States. The city of Los Angeles has been designated as a global city and is considered to be a leader in the technology, science, entertainment, and medicine industry. Los Angeles County is also the most populous county in the United States. The State of California is located in the western (Pacific) region of the United States. California is bordered by the state of Oregon in the north, by Nevada and Arizona in the east, and by the Mexican state of Baja California in the south. It is also bounded by the Pacific Ocean in the west. Regional Maps: Map of North America This page was last updated on May 16, 2024 Family-Friendly AdventuresPlanning a trip with kids? Explore theme parks, beaches, mountains, and other family-friendly California activities. California, known as the Golden State, is one of the most important and diverse states in the United States. It became the 31st state on September 9, 1850, and by the early 1960s, it had become the most populated state in the country. The name "California" likely comes from a Spanish story written in the 1500s about a magical island filled with gold. The capital city of California is Sacramento. California's famous Bear Flag stands for its early struggle for statehood and independence. On the map, the state stretches across many types of land, including deserts, mountains, forests, along with important rivers. It boasts a top-notch educational system, which includes the renowned University of California, and one of the strongest economies in the world. Learn more about California's geography, history, flag, map, interesting facts, and educational institutions by reading on.Read About- All About Maine: Flag, Map, Geography, History, Facts, and EducationWhat is the California State Flag, and what does it represent?The California State Flag, officially adopted in 1911 and standardized in 1953, is famously known as the "Bear Flag." It features a grizzly bear, a red star, and a red stripe at the bottom, with the words "CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC" above the bear. The flag originated during the 1846 Bear Flag Revolt, a brief period when American settlers declared independence from Mexico. The grizzly bear symbolizes the strength and independence of the state, while the red star is a nod to the Lone Star of Texas, representing a similar pursuit of independence. The red stripe at the bottom is believed to represent courage.What does California's Map Symbolize?The California Map visually represents an extraordinary array of geographic and climatic zones. Its shape, long and narrow along the Pacific coast, immediately signifies its connection to the ocean. The map showcases the vast Central Valley, a highly fertile agricultural region fed by the California River system, including the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. To the east, the towering Sierra Nevada mountain range is prominent, while the south features arid deserts like the Mojave. The diverse topography on the California map symbolizes a state rich in natural resources and varied environments, from beaches and forests to volcanoes and valleys.California's Geography is arguably one of the most diverse in the world, stretching approximately 800 miles north to south. It encompasses several distinct regions: Coastal Regions: Featuring rugged cliffs, sandy beaches, and numerous bays. Mountain Ranges: Including the Sierra Nevada with Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the contiguous U.S., and the Coast Ranges. Central Valley: A vast, fertile agricultural heartland. Deserts: Such as the Mojave and Colorado Deserts in the south, characterized by extreme temperatures. Forests: Home to the world's tallest trees, the redwoods, in the north. This extreme diversity is due to California's geological activity, including major fault lines like the San Andreas, and its extensive latitudinal reach. California's History is marked by several defining periods. Originally inhabited by diverse Native American tribes, it became a Spanish colony in the 18th century, followed by Mexican rule. The pivotal moment was the California Gold Rush of 1848, which triggered a massive influx of people and led to its rapid statehood in 1850. Subsequent periods saw the rise of Hollywood, the aerospace industry, and most notably, Silicon Valley, which transformed global technology. This history of rapid growth, innovation, and cultural assimilation makes California a dynamic and influential state.What is unique about California's education system?California's Education system is one of the largest and most complex in the nation, serving millions of students from K-12 through higher education. A unique aspect is its three-tiered public higher education system: California Community Colleges (CCC): The largest community college system in the U.S., offering associate degrees and transfer pathways. California State University (CSU): The largest four-year public university system in the U.S., focusing on undergraduate and master's education. University of California (UC) System: A globally renowned public research university system, including campuses like UCLA and UC Berkeley, known for cutting-edge research and doctoral programs. The University of California attracts top students and faculty worldwide, playing a crucial role in scientific advancements and intellectual leadership. Must Check- Who wrote the Constitution of America? Check Details and Historical FactsConclusionCalifornia is a state of remarkable contrasts and enduring influence. From the symbolism embedded in its State Flag and the varied landscapes on its California Map, to its dynamic Geography and transformative History, the Golden State continually reinvents itself. Its commitment to Education, exemplified by the extensive University of California system and its public colleges, ensures its position as a global leader in innovation and progress. California's rich blend of natural beauty, economic prowess, and forward-thinking initiatives makes it a truly unique and significant part of the American fabric. Geography & Travel States & Other Subdivisions Where is California located in the United States? What is the capital city of California? Can you name some major cities in California? California, constituent state of the United States of America. It was admitted as the 31st state of the union on September 9, 1850, and by the early 1960s it was the most populous U.S. state. No version of the origin of California's name has been fully accepted, but there is wide support for the contention that it derived from an early 16th-century Spanish novel, Las sergas de Esplandián ("The Adventures of Esplandián"), that described a paradisiacal island full of gold and precious stones called California. The influence of the Spanish settlers of the 18th and 19th centuries is evident in California's architecture and place-names. The capital is Sacramento.California is bounded by the U.S. state of Oregon to the north, by the states of Nevada and Arizona to the east, by the Mexican state of Baja California to the south, and by the Pacific Ocean to the west. From the rainy northern coast to the parched Colorado Desert in the south, and from the Mediterranean-like central and southern littoral to the volcanic plateau of the far northeast, California is a land of stunning physical contrasts. Both the highest and lowest points in the 48 conterminous states are in the state of California—Mount Whitney and Death Valley, respectively. The former is the culminating summit of the Sierra Nevada, one of the major mountain ranges of North America. Capital: Sacramento Population1: (2020) 39,538,223; (2024 est.) 39,431,263 Governor: Gavin Newsom (Democrat) Date Of Admission: September 9, 1850 U.S. Senators: Alex Padilla (Democrat) Adam Schiff (Democrat) State Nickname: Golden State State Motto: "Eureka (I Have Found It)" State Bird: California valley quail State Flower: California poppy State Song: "I Love You, California" Seats In U.S. House Of Representatives: 53 of (435) Time Zone: Pacific (GMT − 8 hours) Total Area (Sq Km): 423,967 Total Area (Sq Mi): 163,695 Los AngelesDowntown Los Angeles cityscape.The fluid nature of the state's social, economic, and political life—shaped so largely by the influx of people from other states and countries—has for centuries made California a laboratory for testing new modes of living. California's population, concentrated mostly along the coast, is the most urban in the United States, with more than three-fourths of the state's people living in the Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Diego metropolitan areas. Despite its urbanization and the loss of land to industry, California still leads the country in agricultural production. About one-half of the state's land is federally owned. National parks located throughout the state are devoted to the preservation of nature and natural resources. Area 163,695 square miles (423,967 square km). Population (2020) 39,538,223; (2024 est.) 39,431,263. The heartland of California is the Central Valley, which runs for 450 miles (725 km) through the center of the state, forming a trough between the Coast Ranges to the west and the Sierra Nevada to the east. The valley is the state's agricultural center. Its single opening is the delta through which the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers drain into San Francisco Bay. The valley is sealed off by the Cascade Range to the northeast and by the Klamath Mountains to the northwest. In the far north the terrain is rugged and heavily forested, becoming wetter on the coastal side and drier and barren in the higher northeast. In the south the Central Valley is closed off by the transverse ranges, most notably the Tehachapi Mountains, which are regarded as a dividing wall between southern and central California. Most of eastern California is desert. The sparsely settled northeastern corner of the state is a jumble of barren plains and mountains, as well as a volcanic plateau. In the east-central region is the Trans-Sierra desert, which extends along the sheer east escarpment of the Sierra Nevada range and comprises part of the vast interstate Great Basin of the Basin and Range Province. The Trans-Sierra desert ranges from 2,000 to 7,400 feet (600 to 2,300 meters) above sea level. Its largest towns are in the Owens Valley, which was a fertile farmland until its groundwater flow was diverted to Los Angeles through a mammoth series of conduits built in 1908–13. The Dating Game: Which Came First? The Sierra Nevada rises just to the west of the Trans-Sierra desert. The eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada is sheer, dropping some 10,000 feet (3,000 meters) within a 10-mile (16-km) stretch near Owens Lake. On the west the range slopes in gradually declining foothills toward the Central Valley, comprising the San Joaquin and Sacramento river valleys. From the wall that rises near Lassen Peak in the north, the Sierra Nevada extends south for 430 miles (700 km) to the fringes of Los Angeles. Aside from Mount Whitney (14,494 feet [4,418 meters] above sea level), 10 other peaks in the Sierra Nevada exceed 14,000 feet (4,200 meters) in elevation. East-west passes are few but high; some are found at more than 9,000 feet (2,700 meters) in elevation. There are three national parks in the Sierra Nevada: Kings Canyon, Sequoia, and Yosemite. The last, which was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1978, rises from the purplish foothills of the Mother Lode Country and extends through the ice-carved valleys of the Merced and Tuolumne rivers. Its valleys feature waterfalls and granite domes. brittlebushBrittlebush (Encelia farinosa).In the southeast lies the Mojave Desert, which, at more than 25,000 square miles (65,000 square km), occupies one-sixth of the land area of California. Its landmarks are broad basins and eroded mountains, fault blocks, and alluvial surfaces, most of which are more than 2,000 feet (600 meters) above sea level. Vegetation includes the evergreen creosote bush, yucca, saltbush, burroweed, encelia, cottonwood, and mesquite. Higher up are juniper and piñon pine. Just south of the Mojave Desert is the lower Colorado Desert, an extension of the Sonoran Desert, which begins in the Coachella Valley. The Colorado Desert descends to the Imperial Valley adjacent to the Mexican border. The valley is a heavily irrigated agricultural area known for its winter crops. More than 4,000 square miles (10,500 square km) of the desert lie below sea level, including the 300-square-mile (800-square-km) Salton Sea, a lake with no outlet that was created in 1905–07 when the nearby Colorado River broke out of its channel. The roughly 1,100-mile- (1,800-km-) long coastline of California is mountainous, most dramatically so in the Santa Lucia Range south of San Francisco, where towering cliffs rise about 800 feet (240 meters) above the ocean. Hills of lesser elevation flank entrances to the coast's three major natural harbors, at San Diego, San Francisco, and Eureka. Coastal mountains, made up of many indistinct chains, are from about 20 to 40 miles (30 to 65 km) in width and from 2,000 to 8,000 feet (600 to 2,400 meters) in elevation. redwood treesRedwood trees in Redwood National Park, northwestern California.Southern California's dense settlement lies along a coastal plateau and in valleys ranging from about 10 to 60 miles (16 to 100 km) inland. Along the coast north of the Tehachapi Mountains, the population becomes sparser, though the central coastal region has grown rapidly since the 1990s. The populous coastal area around San Francisco Bay gives way to the less-developed northern coast, where lumbering and fishing villages lie beside creeks and rivers flowing from the Coast Ranges. This is the area of coastal redwood forests and Redwood National Park, which was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980. The 800-mile (1,300-km) San Andreas Fault is a major fault line running through most of California. Tectonic movement along the fault has caused massive earthquakes, including the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. The Hayward Fault in the San Francisco Bay Area and the San Gabriel fault zone in metropolitan Los Angeles have produced several major earthquakes, though the destructive quake centered in the Los Angeles suburb of Northridge in 1994 occurred along one of the San Andreas's larger secondary faults. Separate fault systems in the Sierra Nevada and the Klamath Mountains are tectonically active as well. Water is chronically scarce in southern California and the desert regions, but excesses of rain and snowmelt cause winter flooding along the rivers of the northern coast. Complex systems of dams and aqueducts transport water from north to south, but not without the protests of those who regard the export of water from their regions as a bar to future growth or as a threat to environmental balance. The Colorado River Aqueduct at the Arizona border carries water from that river across the southern California desert and mountains to serve the Los Angeles metropolitan area. The California State Water Project, launched in 1960, is the largest water-transfer system ever undertaken. It is designed to deliver water daily from the Feather River (a tributary of the Sacramento River) in north-central California to communities as far south as the Mexican border. The largest lake of the Sierra Nevada is Lake Tahoe, astride the California-Nevada border at an elevation of 6,229 feet (1,899 meters). A mountain-ringed alpine lake about 193 square miles (500 square km) in area, it has among the world's greatest average depth and a maximum depth of about 1,640 feet (500 meters). Elsewhere in the Sierra lie hundreds of smaller lakes, some above the timberline in regions of tumbled granite and smooth-walled canyons. West of the Sierra Nevada is Clear Lake; at 67 square miles (174 square km), it is the largest natural lake wholly within the state. On the eastern flank of the Sierra are Mono Lake and Owens Lake, both long endangered by agricultural development. CaliforniaState FlagSealNickname: Golden State[1]Motto: "Eureka"[2]Anthem: "I Love You, California"Map of the United States with California highlightedCountryUnited StatesBefore statehoodMexican Cession unorganized territoryAdmitted to the UnionSeptember 9, 1850 (31st)CapitalSacramento[1]Largest cityLos AngelesLargest metro and urban areasGreater Los AngelesGovernment • GovernorGavin Newsom (D) • Lieutenant GovernorEleni Kounalakis (D)LegislatureState Legislature • Upper houseState Senate • Lower houseState AssemblyJudiciarySupreme Court of CaliforniaU.S. senatorsAlex Padilla (D) Adam Schiff (D)U.S. House delegation 40 Democrats 12 Republicans (list)Area • Total163,696 sq mi (423,970 km2) • Land155,959 sq mi (403,932 km2) • Water7,737 sq mi (20,047 km2) 4.7%• Rank3rdDimensions • Length770 mi (1,240 km) • Width250 mi (400 km)Elevation2,900 ft (880 m)Highest elevation (Mount Whitney[3])14,505 ft (4,421.0 m)Lowest elevation (Badwater Basin[4])−279 ft (−85.0 m)Population (2020) • Total39,538,223[5] • Rank1st • Density253.6/sq mi (97.9/km2) • Rank11th • Median household income71,228 • Income rank5thDemonymCalifornianLanguage • Official languageEnglish • Spoken language English: 58.1% Spanish: 28.8% Other: 13.1%[6] Time zoneUTC−08:00 (PST) • Summer (DST)UTC−07:00 (PDT)USPS abbreviationCAISO 3166 codeUS-CATraditional abbreviationCalif., Cal.Latitude32°32′ N to 42° NLongitude114°8′ W to 124°26′ WWebsitewww.ca.gov California state symbolsFlag of CaliforniaLiving insigniaAmphibianCalifornia red-legged frogBirdCalifornia quailFishFresh water: Golden troutMarine: GaribaldiFlowerCalifornia poppyGrassPurple needlegrassInsectCalifornia dogface butterflyMammalLand: California grizzly bear (State animal)[2]Marine: Gray whaleReptileDesert tortoiseTreeCoast redwood & giant sequoia[7]Inanimate insigniaColorsBlue & gold[8]DanceWest Coast SwingFolk danceSquare danceFossilSabre-toothed catGemstoneBenitoiteMineralNative goldRockSerpentineSoilSan JoaquinSportSurfingTartanCalifornia state tartanState route markerState quarterReleased in 2005Lists of United States state symbols California, officially the State of California, is a state in the western part of the United States, along the Pacific Ocean. California is known for its Mexican food, Mexican culture, Cholo subculture and having the largest Mexican and Chicano population outside Mexico.[9] It is the third biggest US state by area (after Alaska and Texas) with 163,696 square mi (423,970 km2). It has more people than any other state with over 39 million people as of 2020. It also has more people than Canada. Its largest cities are Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, and San Francisco. The capital is Sacramento. The states around its borders are Arizona to the southeast, Oregon to the north, Nevada to the east, and the Mexican state of Baja California to the south. California, which has a North/South orientation, has a wide range of climates. The geography of California varies depending on the region. Southwestern California has small mountain ranges and the cities of San Diego and Los Angeles. Southeastern California has the Mojave Desert and Death Valley, the lowest place in the United States. The eastern part of the state has the highest point in the United States outside of Alaska: Mount Whitney, in the Sierra Nevada mountain range.[10] The cities of Sacramento, Bakersfield, and Fresno are in the Central Valley. The valley has the Sierra Nevada to the east and the Pacific Coast Ranges to the west. It is California's single most productive agricultural region and one of the most productive in the world. It produces more than half the fruit, vegetables, and nuts grown in the United States.[11] More than seven million acres (28,000 km2) of the valley are irrigated by an extensive system of reservoirs and canals.[12] The west-central part of the state has some small mountains and the cities of San Francisco, San Jose, and Oakland. Northern California has the Cascade Range, the Klamath Mountains, and the Modoc Plateau.[13] Far northern California does not have many people, but the San Francisco region and the Sacramento region are often thought of as part of northern California. Main article: Climate of California California is home to many animals such as racoons, the California condor, and the mountain lion. California's official flower is the California poppy. California was once home to the Grizzly bear and the jaguar. California poppy is the official flower of California. Hollywood, part of Los Angeles Little Armenia district in Los Angeles The state is a leader in three businesses: farming, movie-making, and high technology, mostly software and websites. Aerospace used to be a large industry there, but it has been downsized in the last 20 years. California is very diverse. Today it has high numbers of Hispanic and Latino Americans, Asian Americans, and Armenian Americans. There are many earthquakes in California. They happen when two tectonic plates (parts of the Earth's crust) shift underground. Californians need to be prepared for earthquakes and often store extra food, water, flashlights, and first aid supplies in case of such an emergency. California has more people than any other state in the United States. If California was a separate country, it would have the sixth largest economy in the world. California is probably the state with the most ethnic groups. It also has many different geographic features – mountains, deserts, and coasts. It is often called The Golden State. The state flower is the golden poppy. The post office uses "CA" as a shorthand for California, and the Associated Press uses "Calif." or "Cali." California has a large population of Mexican Americans. Mexican Americans have influenced Californian cuisine and Californian culture. California also has a large Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Indian, and Chinese population. There aren't as many white people in the state but there are still many Russian, Spaniard, German, English, Scottish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, Irish, and French people in the state. Other ethnic groups in California are Serbians, Persians, Bulgarians, Navajos, Cherokees, Nicaraguans, Alaskans, and Romani people. California is popular among celebrities. Celebrities such as Kim Kardashian, Dwayne Johnson, Kylie Jenner, and Jennifer Aniston are from California. California English is a dialect of the English language spoken within California. California is the home to a highly diverse populace, and this is reflected in many other languages, especially Spanish. As is the case of English is spoken in any state, not all features of California English is used by all speakers in the state, and not all features are restricted in use only to the state. However, there are some linguistic features which can be identified as either originally or predominantly Californian. California is famous for In-N-Out Burger, which is the regional chain of fast food restaurants and founded in 1948 by Harry and Esther Snyder.[14] Protestantism and Catholicism are the most practiced religions in California. A smaller population are Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists. Marijuana became legal in 2016. Californian cuisine is influenced by Spanish cuisine, Mexican cuisine, and Asian cuisine. Mexican food is very popular in California. California is popular for its tourism. Hollywood and Disneyland are popular tourist destinations in California. Most tourists in Los Angeles come from Mexico, China, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Japan, Vietnam, South Korea, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Middle East, and most recently, India, Spain, Italy, and Southeast Asia. In 2019, Gavin Newsom became the governor of California. Before him, the governor was Jerry Brown. On November 4, 1992, Dianne Feinstein became one of California's United States senators. On January 3, 2017, Kamala Harris became the other one. In the 2020 presidential election, Kamala Harris was elected as the first woman and person of color to be Vice President of the United States. In January 2021, Alex Padilla became the next U.S. Senator, replacing Harris, and became the first Hispanic U.S. Senator from the state. California was more conservative during the 1960s and 1980s when its former governor, Ronald Reagan, ran for president as a Republican. Today, California is more liberal and less conservative. The people in Coastal California were Native Americans. The original Californians were a diverse population, separated by language into as many as 135 distinct dialects. Tribes included the Karok, Maidu, Cahuilleno, Mojave, Yokuts, Pomo, Paiute, and Modoc. In the past, the area that was called "California" was not just today's California. This area covered the Mexican lands south of it, as well as Nevada, Utah, and parts of Arizona and Wyoming. The Spanish called the part of the land that later became part of the United States Alta California (Upper California) when it was split from what became Baja California (Lower California). In these early times, the borders of the Sea of Cortez and the Pacific coast were not well known, so the old maps wrongly showed California to be an island. The name comes from Las sergas de Esplandián (Adventures of Spladian), a 16th-century book by Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, where there is an island paradise called California. The first European who visited parts of the coast, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, came from Portugal in 1542. The first European who saw the entire coast was Sir Francis Drake, in 1579, and he decided that the British owned it. But starting in the late 1700s, Spanish religious leaders of the Roman Catholic Church ("missionaries") got large gifts of land in the area north of Baja California, from the Spanish king and queen. These religious people set up small towns and villages, the famous California Missions. When Mexico was no longer controlled by Spain, the Mexican government took over the villages, and they soon became empty. San Francisco, California In 1846, as the Mexican-American War was starting, some Americans in California hoped to create a California Republic. These men flew a "Bear flag" that had a golden bear with a star on it. This Republic ended suddenly, however, when Commodore John D. Sloat of the United States Navy sailed into San Francisco Bay. He said that California was now part of the United States. After the war with Mexico ended, California was split between the two countries. The Mexican portion became the Mexican states of Baja California Norte (north) and Baja California Sur (south). ("Baja" means "lower" in Spanish.) The western part of the part given to the United States became today's state of California. In 1848, there were about 4,000 Spanish-speaking people in today's California on the American side. (Today the state has a total of nearly 40,000,000 people.) In 1849, gold was suddenly found and the number of people went up very fast as the Gold Rush took hold. Slavery also spread there as people hoping to find gold brought African slaves and either forced them to work in gold mines or hired them out for other work.[15] In 1850, California became a state in the Union (the United States). During the American Civil War (1861-1865), many people in California, especially in the southern part of California, thought the South was right and slavery should be protected. Some people in Southern California even wanted Southern California to leave the rest of the state and join the Confederate States of America. However, this did not happen. California joined the war to and helped the North (the Union) and sent many troops east to fight the Confederacy.[16] At first, travel between the far west and the east coast of the United States was dangerous and took a lot of time. Going by land was very difficult, because there were no roads and no trains, and many Native Americans were attacking American people heading West in wagons. The only other way was to travel by boat around the Cape Horn, at the southern end of South America. This took months, since the trip was thousands of miles long and the Panama Canal had not yet been built either. But in 1869, the connection got better quickly, because the first railroad across the continent was finished. Meanwhile, more people in California were learning that the land there was very good to grow fruit and other crops. Oranges were grown in many parts of California. This was the beginning of the huge farming business that California has today. The economy of the State of California is the largest in the United States. It has a gross state product (GSP) of US$3.0 trillion as of 2020.[17] It has many sectors. The most dominant are finance, business services, government and manufacturing. If California were a sovereign nation, according to 2023 statistics, it would rank as the world's fifth largest economy, lying between Japan and India.[18] Over 10% of the Fortune 1000 companies were based in California in 2018.[19] Among the largest economies, it is ranked as number four in the world, according to media (2025).[20] In 1900, there were only a million people in California and 105,000 in Los Angeles. Today, California has more people than any other U.S. state. Starting in 1965, the variety of people became much greater as many different people from around the world came to the United States and often decided to live in California. Technology is very advanced and many new cultural trends begin there. Engineering and computers play a big part in the state's life. For over a hundred years, film has been one of the most important businesses in California. By the 1950s, television had also become an important business in California. Many Latinos especially Mexicans and Salvadorans live in the state. In the twenty-first century, droughts and frequent wildfires attributed to climate change have occurred in the state.[21][22] From 2011 to 2017, a persistent drought was the worst in its recorded history.[23] The 2018 wildfire season was the state's deadliest and most destructive, most notably Camp Fire.[24] California has a growing Hispanic and Asian population. White people are the second largest ethnic group in California. Hispanics surpassed the white population in the 2010s. Although air pollution problems have been reduced, health problems associated with pollution have continued. The brown haze that is known as "smog" has been substantially abated thanks to federal and state restrictions on automobile exhaust.[25][26] In 2021, the number of Hispanic and Latino residents in California had surpassed the number of white residents, with about 15.75 million Hispanics compared to 13.4 million white residents.

↑ 1.0 1.1 "California". www.americaslibrary.gov. Retrieved July 3, 2020. ↑ 2.0 2.1 "Chapter 2 of Division 2 of Title 1 of the California Government Code". California Office of Legislative Counsel. Retrieved February 23, 2019. ↑ The summit of Mount Whitney is the highest point in the Contiguous United States. ↑ "USGS National Elevation Dataset (NED) 1 meter Downloadable Data Collection from The National Map 3D Elevation Program (3DEP)—National Geospatial Data Asset (NGDA) National Elevation Data Set (NED)". United States Geological Survey. September 21, 2015. Archived from the original on March 25, 2019. Retrieved September 22, 2015. ↑ "Population, Population Change, and Estimated Components of Population Change: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2020 (NST-EST2020-alldata)". census.gov. United States Census Bureau. Archived from the original on December 22, 2020. Retrieved April 26, 2021. ↑ "Languages in California (State)". Statistical Atlas. Archived from the original on August 15, 2018. Retrieved August 15, 2018. ↑ "California Government Code § 422". California Office of Legislative Counsel. Retrieved February 23, 2019. ↑ "California Government Code § 424". California Office of Legislative Counsel. Retrieved February 23, 2019. ↑ . {{cite web}}: Missing or empty |title= (help) ↑ "The Geography of California". NetState. January 5, 2014. Retrieved July 13, 2014. ↑ "California's Central Valley: Producing America's Fruits and Vegetables - House Committee on Natural Resources". Archived from the original on August 5, 2016. Retrieved August 4, 2016. ↑ "Federal Agencies Release Data Showing California Central Valley Idle Farmland Doubling During Drought « Landsat Science".[permanent dead link] ↑ "California Geography". Maps of World. June 5, 2014. Retrieved July 13, 2014. ↑ Bowers, Ben (October 27, 2012). "MoB | The History of In-N-Out Burger". Gear Patrol. Retrieved September 22, 2022. ↑ Anderson, Susan (April 2, 2020). "California, a "Free State" Sanctioned Slavery". California Historical Society. Retrieved November 15, 2020. ↑ "California in the Civil War". Archived from the original on April 10, 2011. Retrieved March 8, 2011. ↑ "Gross Domestic Product by State, Fourth Quarter and Annual 2019" (PDF). www.bea.gov. US Department of Commerce, BEA (Bureau of Economic Analysis). Retrieved July 1, 2019. ↑ "California Remains the World's 5th Largest Economy". Governor of California. Retrieved February 12, 2025. ↑ "Geography of Fortune 1000 Companies in 2018". GeoLounge: All Things Geography. November 13, 2018. Retrieved July 2, 2019. ↑ . Retrieved 2025-04-27 ↑ Wilson, Scott (December 5, 2019). "Fires, floods and free parking: California's unending fight against climate change". Washington Post. Retrieved February 8, 2021. ↑ Flavelle, Christopher (September 20, 2020). "How California Became Ground Zero for Climate Disasters". The New York Times. Archived from the original on September 20, 2020. Retrieved February 8, 2021. ↑ "California Facing Worst Drought on Record | NOAA Climate.gov". www.climate.gov. Archived from the original on March 7, 2023. Retrieved February 8, 2021. ↑ "2018 California Wildfires". The United States Census Bureau. Retrieved February 8, 2021. ↑ Deverell, William & Hise, Greg, eds. (2005). Land of Sunshine: An Environmental History of Metropolitan Los Angeles. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press. ISBN 978-0-82294-254-2. ↑ Krier, James E. & Ursin, Edmund (1977). Pollution and Policy: A Case Essay on California and Federal Experience with Motor Vehicle Air Pollution, 1940–1975. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN 978-0-52003-204-0. Find more aboutCaliforniaat Wikipedia's sister projects Definitions from Wiktionary Media from Commons News stories from Wikinews Quotations from Wikiquote Source texts from Wikisource Textbooks from Wikibooks Learning resources from Wikiversity State of California