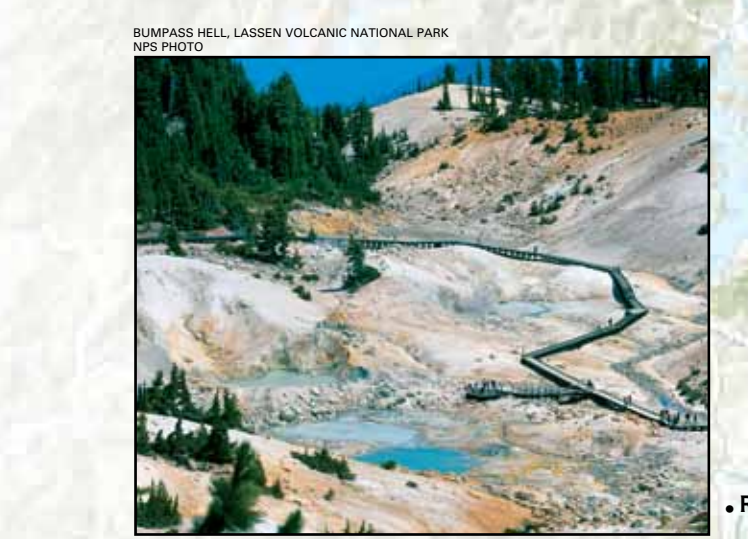


Natural Beauty

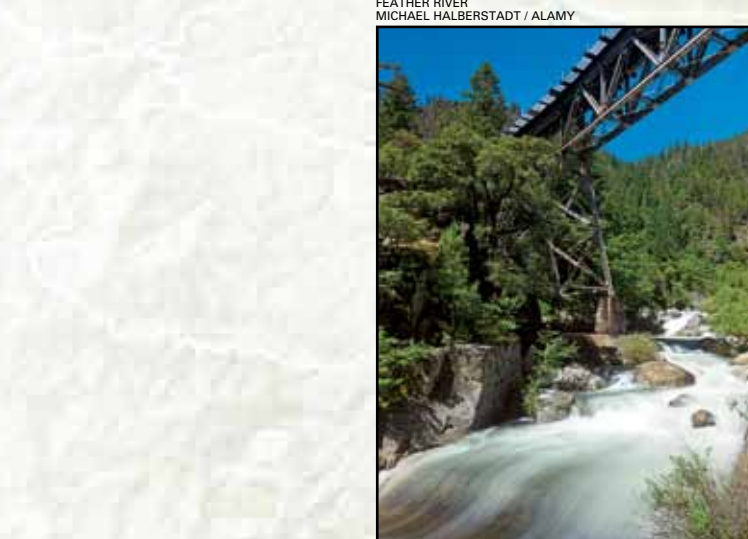
On cold spring nights, halos of translucent ice freeze around streambed boulders. As the sun rises, the circles of ice start to melt, but not before a cross-country skier cruises streamside to admire the clear fragile shards. In an hour the ice halos will be gone.

For all of the Sierra Nevada's grandeur—the granite formations, the broad meadows, the glittering lakes—there are many small and fleeting pleasures. Being in solitude, being quiet, being at ease in nature—in all of these situations a person can find renewal. When President Theodore Roosevelt visited Yosemite National Park in 1903, he celebrated the joys of nature, exclaiming, "This has been the grandest day of my life." Roosevelt's friend, the naturalist-conservationist John Muir, explained his own relationship with wilderness this way: "Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike."

In the Sierra, the excitement of beauty is everywhere: a hiker in a sheltered streambed notices flowers that seem to float in shadows like crimson stars; a motorist pausing at a Kings Canyon National Park viewpoint is moved to tears by a panorama of granite cliffs; and a kayaker paddling next to a white tufa tower touches the stone's chaly surface with her thumb and licks the strange, bitter salt from her skin. Impressions of magnificence endure.



SIERRA BUSINESS COUNCIL LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK
While this lesser-known national park boasts abundant recreation, new-cropping vines, and more than 400 miles of scenic trails, Lassen is best known for volcanic activity. Be sure to see Bumpass Hill, a 16,000-foot volcanic cone; 225-degree boiling Springs Lake; and the park's Kistchen fumaroles.



FEATHER RIVER SCENIC BYWAY
Since 1900, national scenic routes have carried freight and passengers through the Feather River Canyon, one of the most dramatic in the Sierra Nevada. The scenic byway follows the expansive Sierra Valley and further east, following the scenic byway as it parallels the both bridges, crossing streams and weaving through tunnels. Please feel local flora in the historic hamlets of Colusa, Twin, Quincy, and Portola.



SIERRA BUSINESS COUNCIL SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
National Geographic and the residents of California and Nevada are proud to share this Geotourism MapGuide with you to experience our timeless local culture steeped in tradition, sustained by the land.

The Sierra Nevada foothills and mountain range offer world-class opportunities for recreation, exploration of gold-rush and Native American history, indigenous local cuisine and culture, and self-discovery inspired by striking scenic beauty.

Lead project partners include Sierra Business Council, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and National Geographic Maps. We gratefully acknowledge funding and support for this map from Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Federal Highway Administration, United States Forest Service, Merigan Family Foundation, Northern Sierra Partnership, and the Sierra Nevada Geotourism, numerous community organizations, and counties throughout the Sierra Nevada.

Text by Laura Read, author; Tom Miller, editor; Map notes by Angela Burford.
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Visit www.sierranevadageotourism.org or connect with the residents and more than 1,500 of their favorite art and cultural events, historic sites, time-less towns, local shops, and outdoor explorations.

- Map Key**
- National Recreation
 - National Forest
 - National Park or Monument
 - Wilderness
 - National Scenic Byway
 - Other Scenic Byway
 - National Wild and Scenic River
 - Trail
 - Festival or Event
 - Historic Site
 - Museum
 - Natural or Scenic Area
 - Other Point of Interest
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Scheduled Air Service
 - Visitor Center

Scale 1:543,000
0 5 10 15 20 25 Miles
0 5 10 15 20 25 Kilometers
1 inch = 6.6 miles
1 centimeter = 0.4 kilometers

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Sierra Nevada

Events • Outdoor Adventures • Local Culture

Festivals and Events Contribute and Volunteer

- The Sierra Nevada State Fair** (Sierra Nevada State Fairgrounds, Colusa, CA) Celebrating the region's rich cultural heritage since 1977, this 30-kilometer (18.3-mile) fair from Colusa to Yuba City is a celebration of the region's rich cultural heritage.
- Three Rivers Salmon Run** (Three Rivers, CA) (April) Team up for a competition for all ages, call branding, competition, Sunday cowboy church services, beer, live music, and more. Includes horse races, heavy breakfast, and dog-park BBQ.
- Chicago Thursday Night Market** (Chicago, CA) (April to September) Street festival and certified farmers' market featuring live music, craft, and food.
- Bikepacking Days** (Colusa, CA) (June) Celebrating the region's rich cultural heritage, this event features a 170-mile bikepacking route and a 170-mile horsepacking route.
- John Muir Route Celebration** (Mariposa County, CA) (First Saturday of June) Celebrating the anniversary of the dedication of the 14-mile John Muir Historic Route, the family-friendly event includes nature hikes along the foothills of John Muir, eco-friendly activities, readings, bike tours, horseback rides, and arts and crafts.
- Monterey Bay Bird Chautauque** (Monterey Bay, CA) (June) Presenting birding with a wide variety of field trips, workshops, and presentations led by professional photographers, naturalists, and scientists.
- Highway 50 Association Wagon Train** (Placerville, CA) (June) For more than 60 years, members of men, women, and children have taken the 100-mile, 60-mile organized ride from Lake Tahoe to Placerville (Old Hangtown) to experience life during the California gold rush.
- Greenland Quilt Stroll** (Greenland, CA) (June) An odd-numbered year, quilts from all over the world are brought to display and sold, and to exchange stories and techniques. Artisan demos, food, and fun for the kids.
- Mid-Sierra Legends** (Jacksonville, CA) (First weekend in July) The more than 180 events featuring over 700 mules plus exhibitors, a concert, and parade. Determined to prove "with arts and crafts, tractor pull, carnival, games, and bull riding, livestock championships and auction, horse show, and exhibits."
- Virginia City International Camel Races** (Virginia City, NV) (September) Fun-filled event featuring ostrich races mounted by novice riders, interspersed with ostrich races and the occasional bear race. Specialty acts, food, and a concert parade.
- Rails to Trails Festival** (Susanville, CA) (October) Family event celebrating the conversion of the Bear River Railroad into a multi-use trail. Includes horse races and rides, caboose tours, and children's activities.
- Mid-Sierra Mountain Festival** (Susanville, CA) (October) Celebrating the region's rich cultural heritage, this event features a 170-mile bikepacking route and a 170-mile horsepacking route.
- Sierra Nevada Geotourism** (Sierra Nevada) (Year-round) A community of people who love the Sierra Nevada and want to share their love with others.

See more events and volunteer opportunities at www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org.



Outdoor Adventures

A hiker reclines on a stony ridge separating Lake Tahoe from the Great Basin terrain of Nevada. To the east lies a sagebrush desert, its soil so dry in places that occasional wind gusts whip the dust a half-mile high into the air. To the west the snowcapped Sierra crest shimmers, folded and scoured by heat and ice. Below is Lake Tahoe, its cobalt blue hue reflecting the sky. Monstrous peaks, cascading rivers, glacier-carved cirques—the Sierra Nevada's endless landforms are playgrounds for adventure.

The mountain range hosts the oldest living plant on Earth, the bristlecone pine, and grows the largest living organism on earth, the giant sequoia tree. It has some of the world's clearest alpine lakes and one of the nation's saltiest lakes. It contains an astonishingly large geologic form called a batholith, a seam of continuous granite 6 miles deep and 25,000 square miles in the surface, featuring one of the nation's tallest peaks, Mt. Whitney. It also hides one of the Earth's most important metals, gold. Challenged by such extremes, adventurers find ways to test their grit in the Sierra by kayaking thunderous rivers or hiking along the 1,072-mile Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. Some explore the Sierra High Route at 10,000 feet, while others land wild trout or ski backcountry bowls. Some become heroes: "Snowhawk Thompson" delivered mail to mountain hamlets on handmade wooden skis; Norman Clyde and Clarence King scaled 14,000-foot peaks and inspired a new breed of mountaineers. The Sierra landscape fires the imaginations of explorers both young and old, galvanizing ambitions and igniting dreams.



PACIFIC CREST NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL
Whether you hike this 1,072-mile Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail or backpack a shorter segment, you'll encounter the diverse, shifting ecosystems of the Sierra Nevada crest. On foot you have ample time to take in the Joshua trees, 14,000-foot summits, giant sequoias, and alpine lakes. In lower elevations, bobcats and deer wander wetlands and meadows. Thousands of fish enter the end and waxy climate lends vegetation mostly to spruce and grasses but provides habitat for mammals and endangered high-altitude sheep.



TAMHO RIM TRAIL
Backpack your way around Lake Tahoe on the 164.8-mile-long trail, you'll see state parks (California and Nevada), one state park, and alpine lakes. In lower elevations, bobcats and deer wander wetlands and meadows. Thousands of fish enter the end and waxy climate lends vegetation mostly to spruce and grasses but provides habitat for mammals and endangered high-altitude sheep.



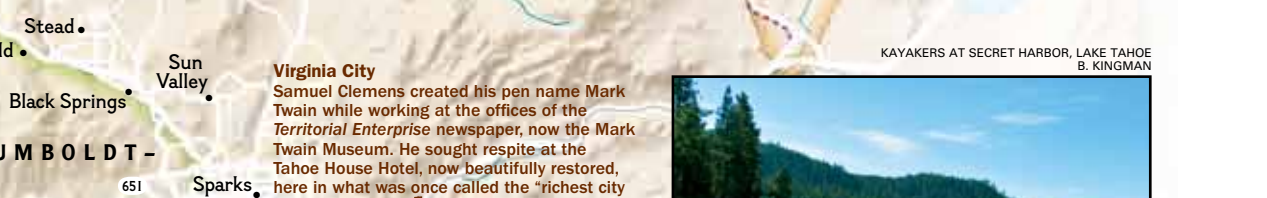
LAKE TAHOE WATER TRAIL
Paddle through creeks, turquoise water on the Lake Tahoe Water Trail and explore secluded coves and white-sand beaches about 72 miles of shoreline. Tour the grand 1820s Tudor Revival-style mansion at Thackeray Lodge National Historic Site, and visit Sand Harbor at Lake Tahoe-Nevada State Park.



DESERTION WILDERNESS
Nearly 84,000 acres (100 square miles) of glacially carved wilderness straddle Lake Tahoe and the Eldorado National Forest, encompassing barren granite peaks, more than 120 lakes, and expansive meadows. The wetlands and landscapes of this protected and support habitat offer a wide range of recreational opportunities. With good reason, Desertion Wilderness attracts seekers of backcountry solitude, scientific study, and primitive recreation.



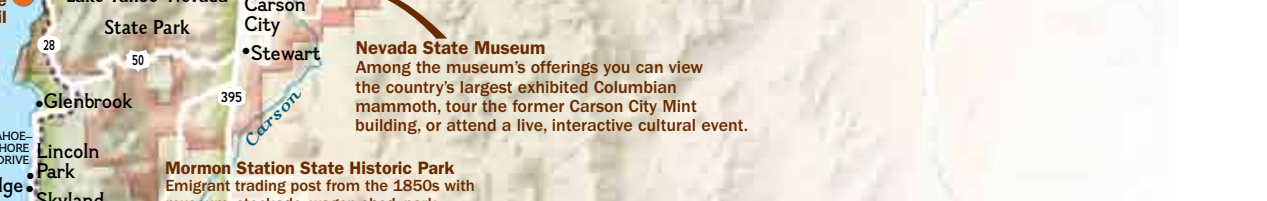
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is a federal agency that manages the Sierra Nevada region, including the Sierra Nevada National Monument and the Sierra Nevada National Scenic Byway. The conservancy is responsible for protecting the natural resources of the Sierra Nevada and promoting sustainable development.



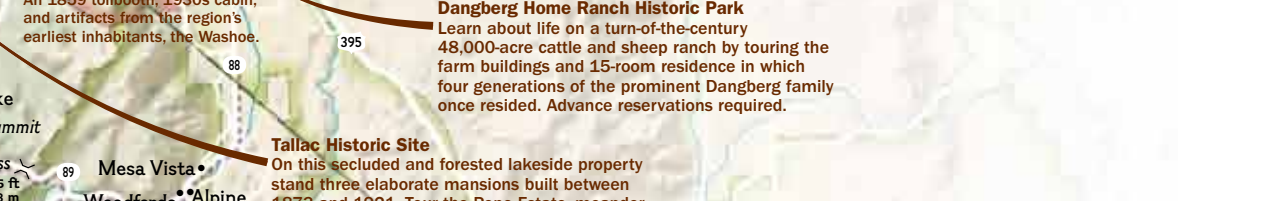
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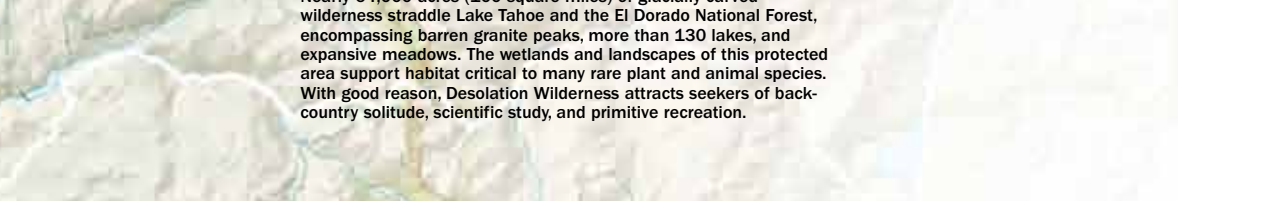
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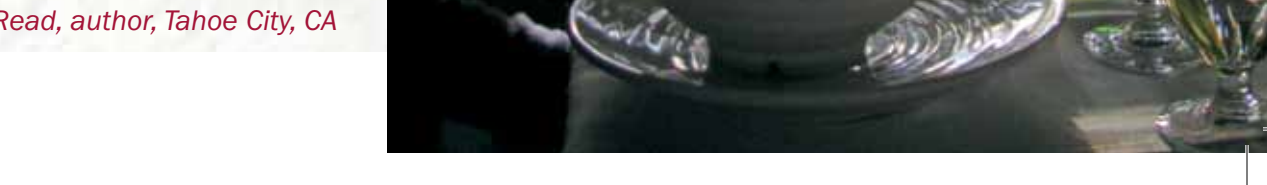
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Mountain Life

The Sierra Nevada has long been a place of drama and aspiration. For centuries, the rugged landscape provided sustenance for the region's Native Americans and mountain communities. In the 19th century, however, lives were changed forever by fortune seekers arriving from around the world in search of gold. The evolution continued in the early 20th century as farmers from Japan and Europe discovered how well fruit grew in the Sierra soil, and established orchards. Later, World War II veterans founded some of the country's first ski resorts. Ever since then, entrepreneurs, nature lovers, and explorers have made lasting impressions on the range.

On Main Street or in the backcountry, it's easy to meet the people of the Sierra, whether they play piano at a historic hotel or lead tours through limestone caverns. Some sell vintage bottles in the town of Murphys or hold traditional powwows on the Modoc Plateau; others build hiking and mountain

biking trails around Lake Tahoe, enjoy regional cuisine in a Sierra Valley barn, or strum the standup bass in Three Rivers. A community's livelihood is often born of the land. In the western foothills, a farming family grows persimmons on a parcel their immigrant grandfather scrimped to buy a century ago. Every autumn the family hand-massages and dries the orange-colored fruit in order to make the traditional Japanese delicacy called *hoshihagi*. In the central and southern foothills, vintners grow wine grapes on old cattle ranch lands. In the town of Springville, ranchers protect historical sites, host green weddings, and promote outdoor education exercises that expand the mind.

Caretakers, curators, and sometimes curiosities themselves—Sierra Nevada residents welcome visitors to share in the future of the remarkable "Range of Light."

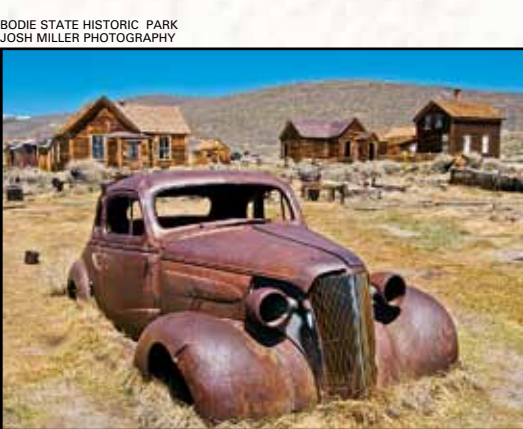
—Laura Read, author, Tahoe City, CA

Connect and Engage

Six photography students are up before dawn, their tripods planted firmly in the Sierra dirt, their lenses trained on an array of peaks and ridges they cannot yet see. Their teacher explains that with the earliest slip of light, the sky will flash indigo blue and the still-black mountains will sharpen in relief. As every second passes, the sun's illumination will change, and so will the students' perceptions.

The Sierra reveals much to people who actively engage with its landscape and traditions. Some activities honor craft and technology, such as basket weaving taught by a Yosemite Miwok, or gold panning demonstrated by a northern foothills miner. Others, including naturalist-guided walks and interpretive center events, reveal natural wonders, such as how a red snow plant bursts through hard soil into sunshine in spring, or how every October, kokanee salmon swims upstream to lay eggs.

From birding festivals at Kern River Valley to river restoration programs such as the annual Great Sierra River Cleanup, group gatherings reflect the diversity of the Sierra's inhabitants. One annual event commemorates America's first downhill ski races organized by gold miners, another challenges the indomitable skills of loggers, while other fairs celebrate animals, including mules in Bishop, jumping frogs in Calaveras, and camels in Virginia City, Nevada. Participants not only make new friends, but also discover new worlds.



BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK
Drive a vintage pace down this 4.5-mile stretch of road that winds through the widest reaches of the Sierra Nevada, including giant sequoias, glacially carved valleys, alpine lakes, and volcanic peaks. Bodie drove you down to dusty, abandoned streets and into homes, the school, and other buildings where time-work furnishings and interiors remain as they were when the last resident left.

MONO LAKE, EBBETS PASS NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY
VIEW FROM EBBETS PASS



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Changing Landscapes

Drinking water, shower water, car wash water: Domestic water doesn't originate at the tap in California; it arrives from the mountains. Up to 65 percent of all of the water consumed in the Golden State flows from a magnificent 400-mile-long spine of peaks and canyons along the state's eastern border—the Sierra Nevada range.

The Sierra narrative is an epic of growth, erosion, and renewal. Four million years ago the Earth's superheated magma shoved surface plates of rock high into the air. Weather and gravity worked as rain, snow, ice, and wind gouged and cracked the mountains and washed away the soil. Today's mountain range is 70 miles wide and more than 14,000 feet high. The sculpted shapes that remain comprise some of the Sierra's grandest places, including the glorious Yosemite Valley, ancient volcanic rock formations of the Sierra Buttes, and the mighty Kern River canyon.

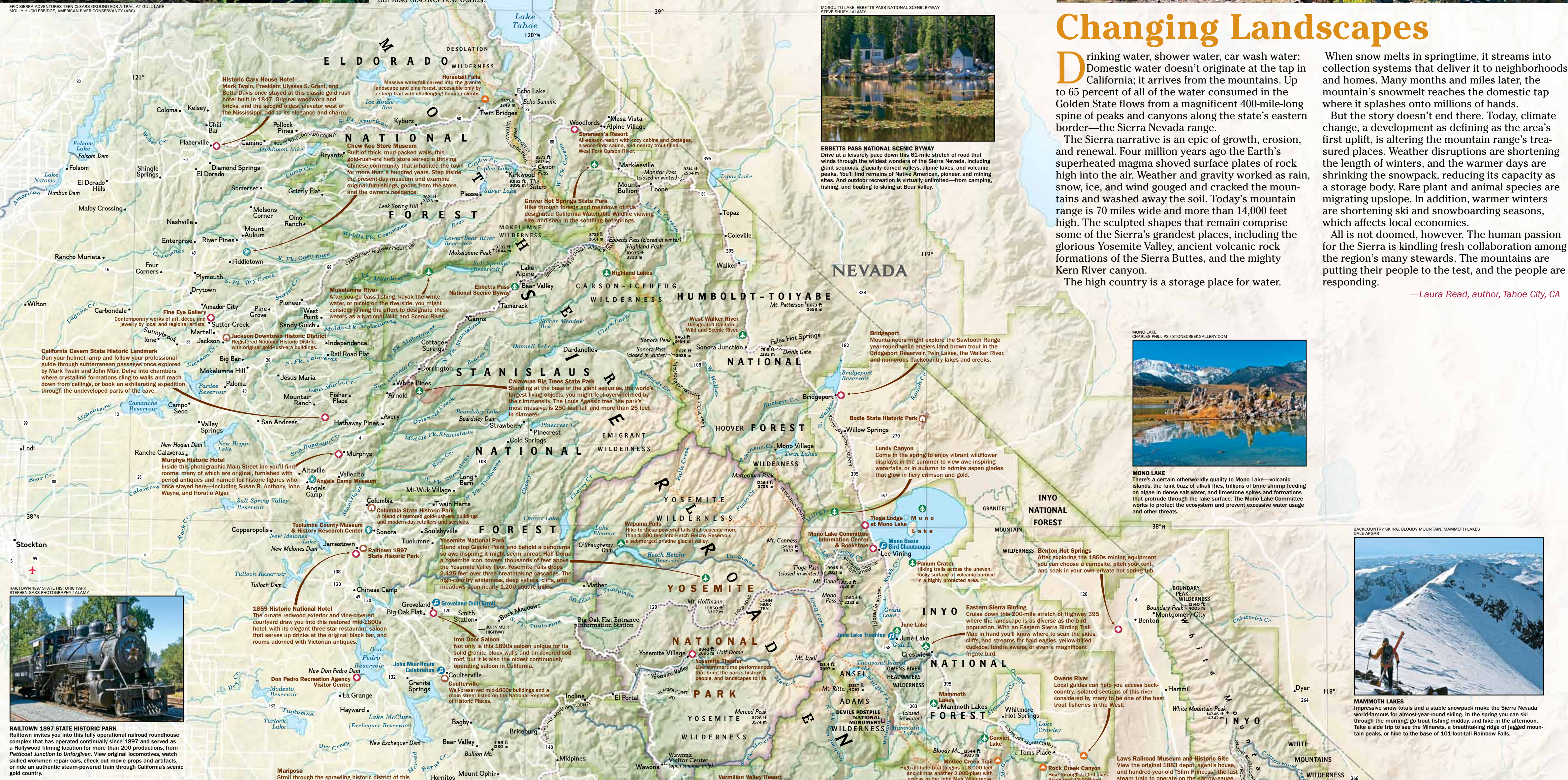
The high country is a storage place for water.

When snow melts in springtime, it streams into collection systems that deliver it to neighborhoods and homes. Many months and miles later, the mountain's snowmelt reaches the domestic tap where it splashes onto millions of hands.

But the story doesn't end there. Today, climate change, a development as defining as the area's first uplift, is altering the mountain ranges' treasured places. Weather disruptions are shortening the length of winters, and the warmer days are shrinking the snowpack, reducing its capacity as a storage body. Rare plant and animal species are migrating upslope. In addition, warmer winters are shortening ski and snowboarding seasons, which affects local economies.

All is not doomed, however. The human passion for the Sierra is kindling fresh collaboration among the region's many stewards. The mountains are putting their people to the test, and the people are responding.

—Laura Read, author, *Tahoe City, CA*



Sierra Nevada Travel Tips

Geotourism invites you to explore new environments and cultures in a way that leaves local resources unexplored for generations to come. In the Sierra Nevada region of California and Nevada, where breathtaking beauty can be found at every turn, we strive to promote the principles of geotourism every day. So as you take your journey to some of the most captivating places on Earth, we hope that you will be enriched by the experience, but also will be inspired to explore and protect it—so you and all those who follow can enjoy it time and again.

Shop Locally
Support Sierra Nevada communities by patronizing local businesses. Support Sierra Nevada communities, unique lodging, and family-owned shops. Supporting the people who support the places you are visiting will reward you with richer experiences.

Volunteer
A great way to get to know a place, and the people who work to protect it, is to lend a hand. Repair hiking trails, pull invasive weeds, restore riparian habitat, catalog historical artifacts, and pick up trash. Be a "volunteer"—check out ways to "Connect and Engage" at www.sierranevadageotourism.org.

Take a Hike
The Sierra Nevada region boasts trails to hike, bike, ski, and ride horses. Local volunteers can lead you on educational day hikes to watch birds, identify wildflowers, and explore public lands. Kayak and paddle along the Lake Tahoe Water Trail to view wild and historic mansions. Wear layered clothing for changeable Sierra weather. Carry and drink plenty of water. Stop to catch your breath and enjoy the views.

Tribal Lands
On any American Indian reservation, you are a guest where people live and work. Taking photos and videos is a sensitive issue. Ask permission first. A great time to visit is during traditional powwows.

Keep Wildlife Wild & Safe
Help protect the Sierra's abundant wildlife. Maintain a respectful distance (and then some), use binoculars and telephoto lenses, refrain from feeding wild animals, and protect wildlife and your food by securely storing your meals and trash, especially when camping at high elevations.

Stop Away from Your Car
Explore the area by getting out to it—by walking, cycling, or taking public transportation for a portion of your travels.

Dirt Roads and Seasonal Roads
Many of the roads between towns and public recreational lands are not paved and vary in maintenance levels. Take it slow, leave the dust cloud, and give the wildlife a break. Don't drive off road, and please respect private property. Some roads, especially those that go over Sierra passes, are only open seasonally due to high snow loads and avalanche danger. Be sure to check if your route is open. Call 1-800-GAS-ROAD for Sierra road and weather conditions.

Leave No Trace
Take only photographs and leave only footprints. Travel on existing trails and camp on hard surfaces. Keep campfires small in established fire pits. Pick up garbage if no trash receptacles are nearby. Let animals rest natural foods rot in place.

Turn Your Lights Off and Look Up at the Night Sky
Without the glare of city lights you'll be astounded at our clear, crisp Sierra skies. Don't miss a chance to see the stars, the planets, and the Milky Way like you've never seen them before.

Be Prepared, Stay Safe
Learn about local conditions and regulations before venturing out. What's the weather forecast? How are the roads? Are open fires permitted or are camp stoves required? Remember that many mountain roads are gravel or single-lane, and always carry a chainsaw for snow and ice during the fall, winter, and spring. Dress in layers. It's not uncommon to experience several seasons during the same day, especially at high elevations.

How This MapGuide Was Created
The people of the Sierra Nevada laid the foundation of this MapGuide by telling the stories of thousands of authentic places and experiences that they would like to share with you. Sites for the map were described and selected by locals. The project is overseen by the Sierra Nevada Geotourism, a diverse alliance of representatives committed to engage visitors in experiences that sustain and enhance the special qualities of the Sierra Nevada.

When you're traveling in the Sierra, use the Sierra Nevada Geotourism mobile phone app to find local places and fun things to do near you!

Visit www.sierranevadageotourism.org to connect with the residents and more than 1,500 of their favorite art and cultural events, historic sites, time-honored towns, local shops, and outdoor explorations.



Culture and Heritage

Early Native Americans and settlers left behind artifacts that immerse visitors in the detail and nostalgia of history. In a traditional roundhouse, Nisenan families hold a ceremony for an annual corn harvest. In a windswept meadow north of Lake Tahoe, campers bake pizza in an early 20th-century Basque fieldstone oven. In the Bodie Hills near Bridgeport, children explore the abandoned buildings of a preserved ghost town. In the western foothills, a ranching family drives cattle across river bridges to winter pastures. In the barren northern history butts examine rutted paths marking the routes of brave 19th-century emigrants seeking prosperity. In the south among the giant redwoods, artists capture the spirit of early settlers embodied in the historic Kaweah Post Office.

Thanks to the people who preserve the Sierra's cultural artifacts and traditions, it is possible to contemplate the region's future while treasuring the past.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC



ALDUBRON KERN RIVER PRESERVE
One of the country's first areas to receive "Globally Important Bird Area" recognition, this natural preserve on the South Fork Kern River contains habitat for several species of birds, including the golden-crowned kinglet, the yellow-crowned night heron, and the southwestern willow flycatcher—and 200 species of nesters.

WILSON'S ORCHID PERSONA IN COTTONWOOD TRAIL, ALDUBRON KERN RIVER PRESERVE

REDDOCK CANYON STATE PARK
Eroded cliffs, buttes, and rock formations rise from the desert floor of a magnificent sandstone ridge. Like along miles of trails, or take a guided nature hike in the spring when wildflowers are ablaze with color.

MONO LAKE
There's a certain otherworldly quality to Mono Lake—volcanic islands, the faint buzz of about five million of gnats during feeding on algae in dense salt water, and limestone spires and formations that protrude through the lake surface. The Mono Lake Committee works to protect the ecosystem and prevent excessive water usage and other threats.

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