



State of California – Military Department
California Cadet Corps

CURRICULUM ON CITIZENSHIP

Strand C1: The State of California

Level 11

This Strand is composed of the following components:

- A. **California Basics**
- B. California Government
- C. California History



Eureka!

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A. California Basics

OBJECTIVES

DESIRED OUTCOME (Self-Mastery)

90% of Unit Cadets will be able to:

1. Identify the key geographic features of California.
2. Name 75% of the listed symbols of California.
3. Discuss details of the people of California, past and present.
4. Name the threats California faces.

A1. California Geography

As someone who lives in California—a Californian—you should know something about your home. California is the third largest state in the United States, after Alaska and Texas. It has significantly more people than any other state. California has a more diverse **topography** than most places. We have mountains, an ocean, large rivers, a huge desert, glaciers, forests, large cities, and millions of acres of productive farmland.



California borders three other states: Oregon in the north, Nevada and Arizona to the east. We border the nation of Mexico to the south and the Pacific Ocean to the west. California is about 800 miles long (north to south) and 250 miles wide (west to east).

The highest point in California and in the whole **contiguous** United States (not including Alaska or Hawaii) is Mount Whitney, at over 14,000 feet. The lowest point in the United States is in Death Valley, at 282 feet below sea level.

The major features of California are:

Mountain Ranges:

- Klamath Mountains: Mountains in the northwest of California (and into Oregon) – high and forested.
- Coastal Mountain Ranges: Mountains that **parallel** the coast from the far north down to Santa Barbara.
- The Sierra Nevada Mountains: Mountains in the east along the border with Nevada.
- The Los Angeles (or Transverse) Ranges: Mountains that run east to west between Santa Barbara and San Diego.
- San Diego (or Peninsular) Ranges: Running into Baja California from San Diego County.
- Basin and Range Region: Narrow mountain ranges and flat **arid** valleys or basins. Deserts in the southeast and northeast of California fall in this area.



(NASA, 2005)





The **Central Valley**:

Running along the middle of the state between the Coastal Ranges and the Sierra Nevada, the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys join to comprise a large part of California's farmland.

Major Rivers:

- Sacramento
- San Joaquin
- Colorado

Major Lakes:

- Lake Tahoe
- Salton Sea
- Owens Lake
- Searles Lake



Earthquakes: Due to major **faults** running under California (especially the San Andreas) and **tectonic** activity that is seen along many coastal regions, California sees major earthquakes frequently. The most historically significant have been:

- 1906 San Francisco Earthquake (magnitude 7.8-8.2)
- 1971 San Fernando Earthquake (magnitude 6.6)
- 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake (magnitude 6.9-7.1)
- 1994 Northridge Earthquake (magnitude 6.7)

There are several significant cities in California which are as much a part of the geography as the mountains. The largest **metropolitan** areas are Los Angeles, San Francisco/Oakland, San Diego, Riverside/San Bernardino, Sacramento, and San Jose.

The **climate** in California is as diverse as the land and people. The coastal areas and southern parts of the state enjoy a Mediterranean climate with moderately rainy winters and



mild, dry summers. The ocean moderates the climate well inland. The high Sierra Mountains have a typical climate, with warm summers and lots of snow in the winter. And the desert areas of the eastern parts of California are typically quite hot in the summers and cold in the winters, with a small amount of rain coming during winter months. The northern coast of California gets more precipitation (rain) than Southern California, which gets dryer as you move south and east.

A2. California Symbols (Library, 2018)

State Flag



State Seal



State Colors: Blue & Gold



State Flower: The California Poppy



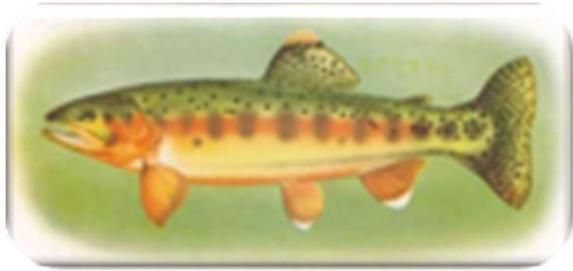
State Insect: The Dogface Butterfly



State Tree: The California Redwood



State Fish: The Golden Trout



State Animal: The Grizzly Bear



State Fossil: The Saber-Toothed Cat



State Reptile: The Desert Tortoise



State Bird: The California Quail



State Amphibian: The California Red-Legged Frog



State Motto: **Eureka!** (Greek for “I have found it”)

State Nickname: The Golden State

A3. The People of California

California has been a favorite place for people to live for thousands of years. The native people of California lived all over the state. Tribes or bands sharing cultural or *linguistic* connections generally lived in small groups or villages that were loosely tied together. Most people lived in established permanent places all year, though in areas where resources were hard to come by, people tended to be more *nomadic*. People who lived near rivers or the coast were more settled than those living in the desert or foothills. Generally, the people of California were more stable and less in conflict with others than in other parts of North America.

(Collections, 2006)



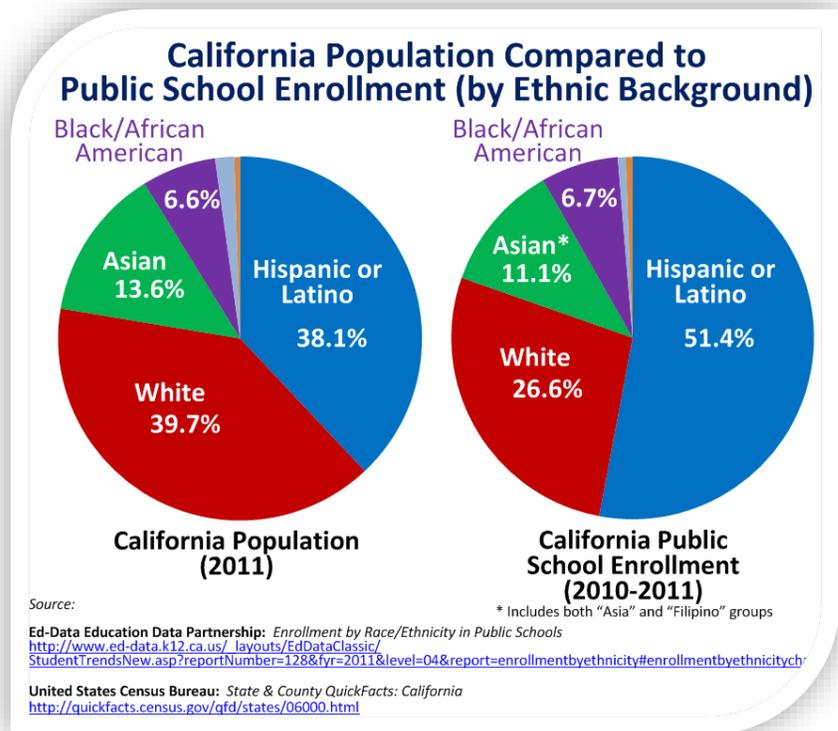


(maps.com, 2018)

Many native bands and cultures died out as a result of their interaction with European settlers and with the Catholic missions established throughout the state. Estimated numbers are that there were 275,000 natives prior to European settlement and only about 15,000 left at the end of the 19th Century. Only 1% of Californians are listed as Native American, though there are more Native Americans in California (numerically) than in any other state, and there are more tribes. Many of these are immigrants into California from other parts of the US or Central America. California has significant populations of the Apache, Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Hopi, Zuni, Navajo, Blackfeet, Shoshone, Paiute, Pueblos, Cahuilla, and Chumash tribes. People of native descent try today to hold on to their culture and language in many places throughout California, living both on and off the reservation, which in many cases in California is called a “rancheria.”

California has significantly more people than any other state in the United States. We have about 12% of all the people in the US. It’s a very diverse population, too. California is a majority-minority, meaning the majority of people are ethnic minorities.

So, who are the “people of California” in the 21st Century? They are increasingly Hispanic or Latino, with large percentages of Whites, Asians, and Blacks. California has significant numbers of people from all over the world. Gender is about 50/50 male/female.



California Population as of April 2017	
Population estimates, July 1, 2017, (V2017)	39,536,653
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2017)	37,254,518
Population, percent change – April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2017, (V2017)	6.10%
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	37,253,956
Age and Sex	
Persons under 5 years	6.30%
Persons under 18 years	22.90%
Persons 65 years and over	13.90%
Female persons	50.30%
	0.503
Race and Hispanic Origin	
White alone	72.40%
Black or African American alone	6.50%
Native American and Alaska Native alone	1.60%
Asian alone	15.20%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.05%
Two or More Races	3.90%
Hispanic or Latino	39.10%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	37.20%
Source: US Census Bureau (Bureau, 2017)	

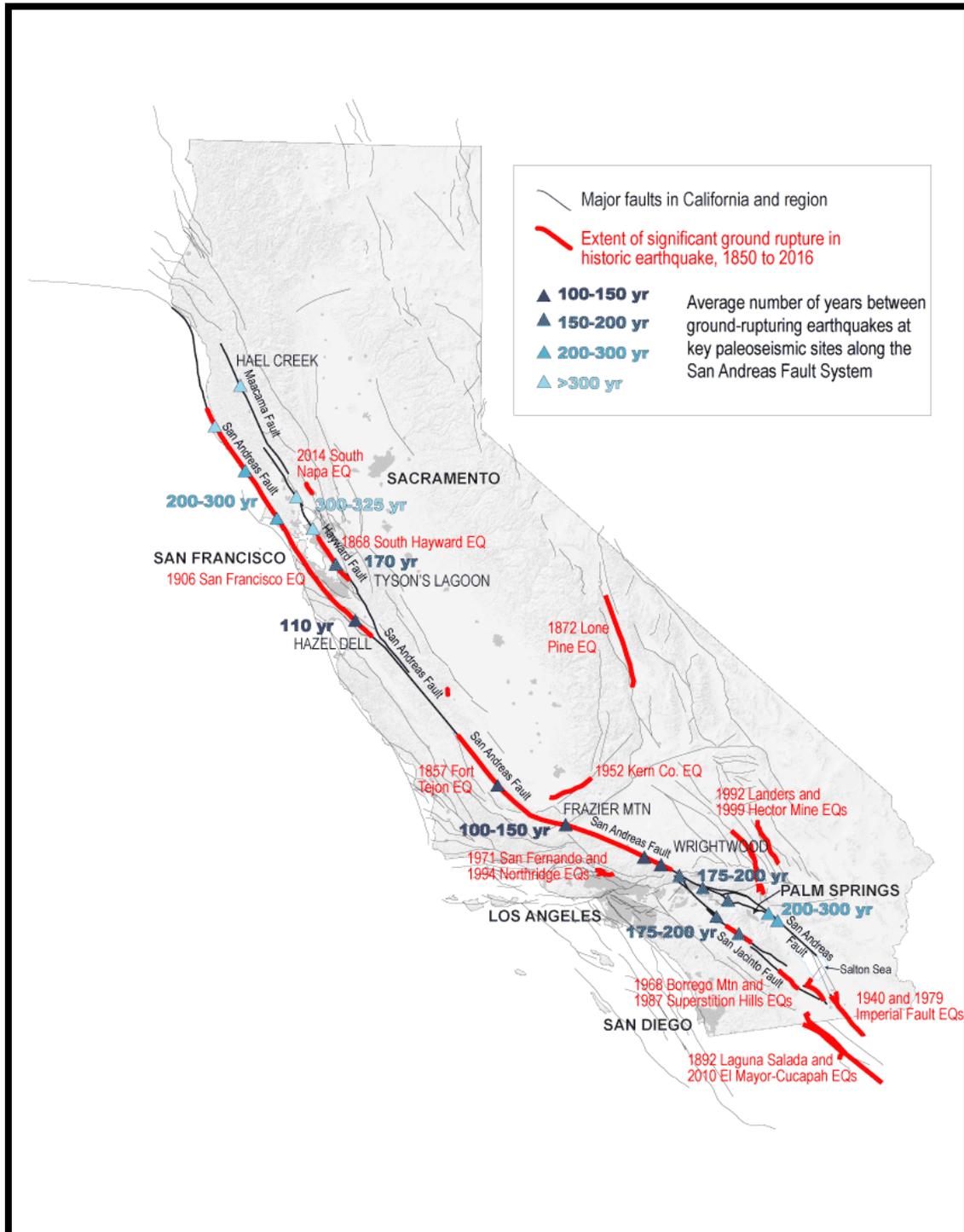
A4. Threats in California

Californians are not strangers to **catastrophe**. We experience earthquakes, floods, wildfires, and sometimes even riots. Why would anyone live where such things happen seemingly so frequently? Chances are you have never been seriously affected by any of these events, and those who have tend to deal with it and continue with their life.

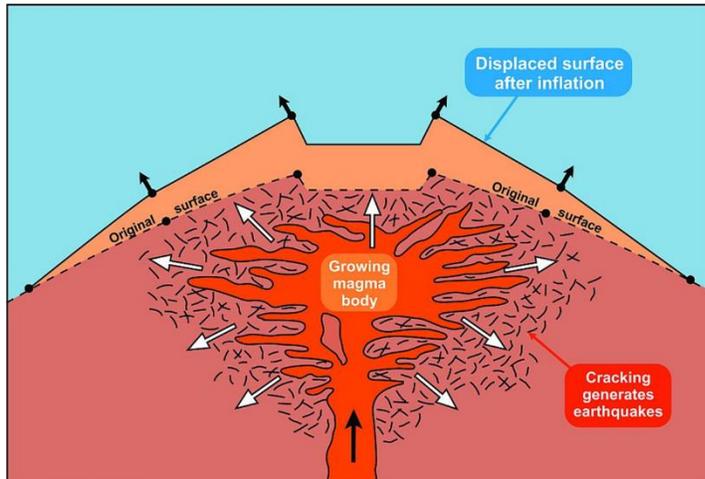
The National Guard, our parent organization for the California Cadet Corps, helps the state recover or deal with this type of disaster, natural or manmade. The Soldiers and Airmen of the California National Guard are well acquainted with helping with disasters, whether it's helping CalFIRE fight wildfires, working with law enforcement during riots, or helping search for survivors of major earthquakes. Helping the state is a significant mission that the Guard prepares for and steps up to do whenever called.



Why does California have so many earthquakes? You can do an online search for “plate tectonics” to learn about the theory of huge plates on the earth’s surface and ***mantle*** moving slowly against each other. In our case, the Pacific Plate is slowly moving northward and coming into contact with the North American Plate, which is moving south. This causes a type of friction as the plates slide past each other, creating a fault where strong earthquakes can occur. The San Andreas Fault in California is an example



of a transform boundary between two plates. The San Andreas Fault is the boundary line between the two plates, and it runs roughly from north to south along much of the length of the state. There are hundreds of other smaller faults in the state, with about 200 of them considered potentially dangerous due to their slip rates. An estimated 70 percent of the state's population lives within 30 miles of a fault, where noticeable levels of ground shaking can occur.



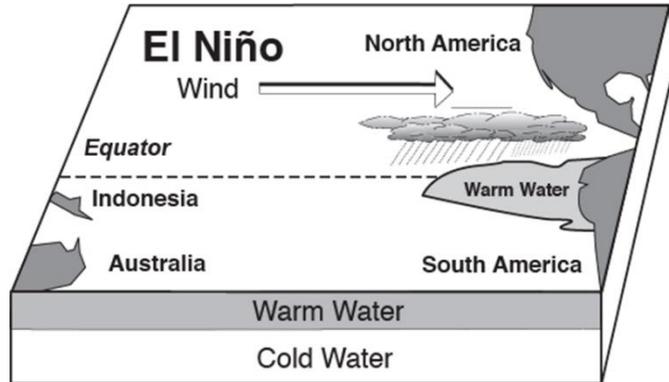
Another source of earthquakes is volcanic activity (though that's also a result of plate tectonics), and California experiences these types of earthquakes all the time. Like earthquakes on faults, most of these are small and don't really cause damage. But where there's volcanic activity, there are earthquakes. This is especially significant in California in the Mammoth Lakes region, Mount Lassen, and Mount Shasta.

California generally experiences two or three large-scale earthquakes per year of a magnitude of 5.5 or greater, which is the level at which moderate damage to structures can occur. Small earthquakes occur on an almost daily basis throughout the state, but most are too small to be felt and do no damage. The state commonly experiences around 3,000 earthquakes each year.

Though California has suffered major damage due to strong earthquakes, we have done much to prevent significant damage. We have stringent building codes that require construction of buildings and roads to meet standards that help prevent damage from earthquakes. Of course, this means it's more expensive to build things. But you if you see the catastrophic damage caused by quakes in places where such standards aren't used, you see the worth of these standards.

Wildfires are another problem California faces each year, causing damage when they come in contact with human **habitation**. One of the reasons California experiences a lot of wildfires is that we have so much forested land, and many fires are started by lightning. When the state experiences drought conditions, which unfortunately is often, the land dries out and is more susceptible to burning. Often, winds fan the flames and drive the fire toward places where people live. Many people also claim that the practice of fighting fires when they occur actually leads to a situation where a large fire can be catastrophic. They argue that letting smaller fires burn off the dead vegetation prevents larger fires from getting out of control. Another argument is that logging, which environmentalists have been somewhat successful at preventing in parts of California, helps prevent fires by removing the fuel.

Californians look forward to years when we're affected by El Niño, the **phenomenon** where temperatures rise in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of South America. This causes increased rainfall in Southern California, which eases our almost constant drought situation.



Unfortunately, sometimes we get too much rain or snow, which can cause flooding, another natural disaster for Californians. We don't experience as many floods as, say, people who live along the



Mississippi River. But it has been a problem over the years. Rivers are the most common places floods happen, caused by excessive rainfall or snow melt. Flooding in California has been exacerbated by the wildfires we experience. When a landscape is damaged by fire, vegetation that helps keep the soil in place can be burned off. Then, if the same place gets heavy rainfall, the land is **susceptible** to mudslides or extreme runoff, both of which makes flooding worse.

We've talked about the natural disasters California faces every year. Sometimes our disasters are caused purely by people. Some significant civil disturbances have been:

- 1965 riots in Watts (Los Angeles)
- 1992 riots in Los Angeles (Rodney King)
- San Bernardino Punk Riot of 2006
- 2007 MacArthur Park Rallies (regarding immigration)
- 2009 & 2010 BART Police Shooting of Oscar Grant in Oakland (after incident and trial)
- 2010 Santa Cruz May Day Riot
- Black Lives Matter
- Occupy Movement

Riots often start when people are already angry about a long-term situation they deem unfair. Over the years, racial discrimination and injustice has been a main cause for riots. People perceive that police or other authorities treat some groups unfairly. Then an incident happens that just seems to tip the anger over the top, and people react by taking to the streets. Other civil disturbances have happened when people are protesting peacefully and the reaction of the people or the authorities (police or government) becomes violent (from either side, then both). Sometimes the rioters mean for the

situation to get out of hand, and other times it just happens. Always, people are hurt, property is damaged, and the situation that caused the disturbance in the first place is usually not solved.

If you look up a list of incidents of civil unrest in the United States, you'll see that they happen in many places. But there have been a lot of incidents in California—in Los Angeles and Oakland (a lot), San Francisco, Berkeley, San Bernardino, Anaheim, and various other cities where people get angry about a situation they feel strongly about.

While California may have its share of disasters and threats, a study by CEOWORLD Magazine (Dhiraj, 2018) ranked it as the US state with the most diversity, which is something in which many Californians take pride. The study considered the following *metrics* of diversity: culture, economic, household marital status and age groups, politics, religion, and socioeconomics. And this is in addition to our diverse topography mentioned earlier. Of course, opinion varies, but we think we're a pretty great state!

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