



NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Native American Heritage Commission Publishes Digital Atlas of California Native Americans

WEST SACRAMENTO – The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) this week published the [Digital Atlas of California Native Americans \(Digital Atlas\)](#). Created in partnership with the [California Department of Parks & Recreation](#) with generous financial support from the [DRAM Antitrust Settlement](#), the Digital Atlas is a free online tool to help students and the public visualize California before, during and after European occupation, with a focus on the Native American experience.

The Digital Atlas also links to primary-source evidence presented by Benjamin Madley in his 2016 book [An American Genocide](#), which catalogues the depredations committed by early Californians and State Actors against California Native Americans. Californians may use the Atlas to learn more about the acts committed in their own communities, sometimes by the namesakes of the towns they live in, the streets they drive to work on or their children's schools.

"The Digital Atlas brings to life the rich diversity, histories and cultures of California Native peoples and the places they have called home since time immemorial," said Christina Snider, Tribal Advisor to Governor Gavin Newsom and Executive Secretary to the NAHC. "We hope to continue to support and expand the tools available for the public to learn more about the Native experiences that are foundational to the story of California."

The Digital Atlas web application also includes a collection of map layers related to the history and cultural heritage of Native Americans in California. The map layers include:

- Cultural Base Map: the 60 traditional cultural regions of California, with links to a directory of affiliated Tribes and [Tribal Atlas pages](#)
- Historical Lakes & Wetlands: California's lakes and wetlands as depicted in an 1866 survey, prior to major flood control projects
- Natural Resources: Natural resources traditionally used in different regions of the state

- Estimated Population in 1769: Estimated population by region before colonization
- Trails: Approximate routes of trails used before colonization
- Trade Relations: Trade routes that existed before colonization
- Missions: Locations of missions established during Spanish colonization
- Spanish & Mexican Land Grants: Land appropriated and privatized during Spanish and Mexican colonization
- Treaty Lands: Reservations and cessions as negotiated between Tribes and federal agents in early days of U.S. colonization
- An American Genocide: Incidents of genocide recorded by historian Benjamin Madley in his 2016 book *An American Genocide*
- Bounty Lands: Lands granted by the U.S. government to militiamen who participated in campaigns against Native Americans
- Reservations & Allotments: Reservations and public domain allotments (PDA) in the 21st century

Using this tool, users can compare the 10 million acres promised as reservations in the 18 unratified treaties with the 990 thousand, mostly scattered acres of Native American reservations, rancherias and allotments in California today. At the same scale, users can also see the 60 thousand acres of “bounty land” granted to militia veterans for their service in genocidal campaigns during the early years of statehood, and compare the rich farmland distributed by this instrument to the often marginal lands reserved for tribes.

To learn more about the Atlas and the work of the Commission, please go to nahc.ca.gov or attend a walkthrough webinar on **Thursday, September 24 at noon**. Participation details are available [here](#).

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