

# California Site and Situation

I. Define Geography - Fennemin's model (Lecture Diagram)

II. Physical vs. Cultural Geography

Physical - the stage

Cultural - the play

Topical vs. Regional Approach - differences liabilities and virtues of each approach.

III. Organization of the course. Three units 1. Physical 2. Topical (cultural) 3. Regional (Cultural).

Read Motalvo (ref. pg. 3)

IV. Define SITE and SITUATION

Site - Internal structure, give examples

Situation - External relationships

A. SITUATION of California

1. Surrounding states, Mexico, (Alta vs. Baja California) Pacific Ocean esp. useful for ports and commerce.

2. Location within the U.S. and size comparison with other states.

Third in size after Alaska and Texas. (158,693 sq. mi.)

California is larger than Great Britain, Japan, Italy, or Norway.

a. Length of state

1) Straight line Ore. to Mexico 758 mi. (1220 km)

2) Contour of Coastline 1072 mi. (1725 km) ex. islands.

3) Straight line Oregon coastline to Cal. s.e. border is 828 mi.(332 km) Colorado-Gila River confluence.

4) Medial Line Ore. to Mex. Border 780 mi.(1255 km.)

b. Width of State

1) San Francisco to Tahoe (narrowest) 150 mi.(241 km.)

2) Point Arguello (near Pt. Conception) to Nevada Border (widest) 257 mi. (414 km.)

3. Linkages (road, railroad, air etc.) with other states.

4. Note isolation due to deserts to the east and this historical problem for early migration.

B. SITE of California

1. Boundaries: History, final boundary locations, size of state, shape of state. ref.

Treaty with Spain 1821 established the 42nd parallel. (see 3e. below)

a) History

1) Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Feb. 2 1848 ceded California, Nevada, Utah, Most of New Mexico, and Arizona, parts of Wyoming, Colorado, and Texas along the Rio Grande River.

2) Constitutional Convention- Colton Hall, Monterey Sept. 1849

a. No question about the name of new state.

b. Much debate about borders:

Some wanted to go to Rocky Mtns., others 108th Meridian, (the east side of the treaty boundary), others along the crest of the Sierra Nevada's.

c. There was confusion because some of the lands were only partially explored and few realized their extent.

3) Final borders established are:

a. Beg. N.E. Corner the 120 West Meridian boundary between Lat. 42 to 39 N. (Lays in Lake Tahoe, probably not known by convention)

b. Next a St. line connects 120W,39N with point where the Colorado R. crosses the 35 th parallel.

c. From there along Colorado R. to its confluence with the Gila R.

d. Then west (by treaty) to a point of 1 marine league (3.45 mi. 5.55 km) S. of the southern tip of San Diego Bay.

- e. The northern boundary is the 42nd parallel. which also defines boundaries of Nevada and Utah.  
This dates back to the Florida Treaty ratified in 1821 which in addition to Florida marked off the boundary lines between the U.S. and Spanish - American possessions west of the Mississippi R. at that time.

4) Survey problems: Aurora was County seat of Mono Co. but in 1899 found to be inside of Nevada.

5) Note: San Diego is east of 90% of Washington & Oregon and about 40% of Nevada.

**b) Shape of California**

Ratio of length to width 3.5 to 1 causes problems for the state. Climate variation, water availability and need etc i.e. Northern Cal. S.F with water to southern Cal. L.A. little water. also regional identity, loyalty, more important than political party affiliations.

2. Natural vs. Cultural Boundaries

a. Natural

Colorado River

Gila River

Pacific Ocean

b. Cultural

42nd parallel,

Diagonal line Tahoe - Col.R.

Mexico by treaty.

Note: No real acceptable justification for the location of these boundaries.

Actually no boundary line is better than any other in today's world.

In old days Mtns., Rivers, etc. made sense, but not today.

What if all of Colorado R. was inside of California ?

Consider - WATER RIGHTS Cal. would own all of the Col. R. water.

3. Longitude and Latitude lecture about 35 minutes. (Lecture notes or a good geography book)

4. Maps and Mapping – Cadastral Systems

a. Metes and Bounds

b. Rectangular Survey

c. Subdivisions

d. Don't forget map reading assignment.

END