

Peninsular Ranges

Purpose: To identify that region of California which is part of the mountainous south-west corner of the state.

I. Location and Justification for the Regional Boundry.

A. Part of the Baja Peninsula (hence the name for the region)

B. Contains landforms of granitic (batholithic) origin, fault blocked mtns., alluvial valleys, on the windward side of the state.

1. Explain batholith and granitic 2. Explain alluvial 3. Explain Fault blocked - note that most Cal. fault blocked mtns. are rotated (hinged) on the west sides, with steep eastern escarpments.

C. Boundry Justification

1. East end of mountains, rain shadow desert 2. South boundry with Mexico 3. West the sea
4. North the Transverse (east-west tending) mtns., of different age, and caused by pressure along the San Andreas rift zone. Therefore deemed unique enough to be considered a different region in their own right.

II. Physical Geography

A. Interior Highlands.

1. Very rugged, but not high enough for alpine sports.
2. Many alluvial valleys.
a. explain alluvial deposition
b. good for agriculture and urbanization
c. deep fill which is under water for a long time = deposition of organic material which can lead to coal and/or petroleum sources.

B. Coastal Features

1. Marine Terraces along the coast.
a. caused by wave action when sea level was "higher" relative to the land. Cabrillo is built on several marine terraces.
b. ideal for homes, may be good for agriculture if terrace is large enough and soil is good.
c. streams cut terrace canyons or barrancas into the terraces (like Porter Gulch), usually contains different native vegetation than the terraces above. Called riparian woodland or vegetation.
2. Beaches
a. Longshore transport - SHOW BEACH A RIVER OF SAND
b. note especially beach deprivation due to dams, harbors, etc.
c. headland erosion
d. sub-marine canyons

C. The Islands

1. Extentions of mtn. ranges 2. San Clemente Island = Fault blocked 3. Catalina no surface symmetry
4. Santa Barbara Is. (small) and San Nicolas Is. are also part of the Peninsular ranges geologically. Uninhabited.

III. Cultural Geography

A. Interior Highlands

1. Mt. San Jacinto Aerial Tramway to 11,000'.
2. Idyllwild (s.w. edge of Mt. San Jacinto State Park) is only "alpine" settlement in the ranges. Other high "towns" include Julian and Warner Springs.
3. Rugged terrain discourage urban and agricultural development.
4. Agriculture in San Jacinto Basin and coastward. Longer growing seasons, better soils, water. Fallbrook, Escondido = largest avocado area in state. Hemet, Perris, & Temecula started out as agricultural service centers. Today serve retired, military & other non-agricultural populations.
5. Retirement areas Rancho California, Sun City.
6. Military - March A.F.B.
7. Recreation areas - Murrieta Hot Springs, Lake Elsinore.

B. Coastal Area

San Diego and Environs

1. Alluvial Valleys along coast were inhabited by indians.
2. First european settlement in Cal. = San Diego de Alcalá (mission)
3. Mission Valley = alluvial refilling of former terrace canyons.
4. San Diego, now Cal. 2nd largest city = built on gently sloping marine terraces, & spread out on all sides into alluvial fans.
5. S. Diego Bay = a great natural harbor protected from winds and tides.
6. Mission Bay = reclaimed tidal flat = recreational attractions like Sea World, and Vacation Island.
7. Beach area heavily urbanized. Separated from L.A. Long Beach metropolitan area by (Marine) Camp Pendleton. Oceanside, 2nd largest city after S. Diego in size serves Pendleton.

Los Angeles Basin

1. Basin produced by alluvial fill from L.A., San Gabriel, and Santa Ana Rivers and Ballona Creek.
2. Basin is an downfold (syncline) which is 31,000 feet below sea level and was under water = petroleum
3. 9 million people live on this coastal plain.
4. faults (Palos Verdes, Newport-Inglewood) produced uplifted Palos Verdes Penninsula, Dominguez Hills, Baldwin Hills.
5. As noted before San Pedro Harbor is man made.

The Islands

1. All of the offshore islands are continuations of the mountain ranges on the continent.
2. Most submerged with the rise of sea level after the melting of the pleistocene ice caps.
3. Most are fault blocked with the steep eastern escarpment like the penninsula ranges of which they are a part.
4. San Clemente Is. is a naval base, otherwise uninhabited with unique flora and fauna.
5. Catalina Is. 2000 residents, Avalon Harbor. Tourist attraction, the old white steamshop now gone, seaplanes, has a dangerous landing strip for private aircraft.
6. Farther offshore tiny Santa Bargarra Is. and San Nicolas Is. not visible from mainland and also uninhabited.

End

