

Klamath Mountains Province

Purpose: To acquaint the student with the Klamath Mtns. region of California.

I. Location and Physical Geography

- A. That region bordered on the north by the Oregon border, south by the Central Valley, west by the narrow North Coast Range, east by the volcanic Southern Cascades.
- B. Geologic Past
 - 1. Reason for this as a separate region is its physiography.
 - 2. Coast Range = sedimentary rock
 - 3. Cascades = recent volcanics
 - 4. Klamath = most complex Mtns. in the state.
 - a. oldest rock = Sierra granitic (K. Mtns. = extension of old Sierra intrusions (about 100,000,000 yrs. old)
 - b. Quaternary period = lava covered. Heavily eroded top material. Most old volcanic gone, much of metamorphic rock now at surface.
 - c. Much erosion caused by major rivers and heaviest ppt. in California.

REVIEW IGNEOUS, METAMORPHIC, SEDIMENTARY ROCK TYPES

- d. Klamath Mtns. are about the most rugged in California.
- e. steep canyons, fast rivers, much rainfall, snow in highest peaks.
- f. elevations to 9000'
- g. Pleistocene glaciation has left its mark esp. in the Trinity Alps (name says it).
- h. post pleistocene erosion has removed much of the evidence of glacial landforms. Sierras are a better place to study glacial landforms.
- i. rugged terrain has meant inaccessibility = little development.
- j. 40% of the California River Runoff = Klamath Mtn. Rivers.
They include: Klamath R. - from Columbia Plateau of Oregon.; (Sacramento R. - from a spring at the base of Mt. Shasta not really part of Klamath Mtns.); the Salmon, Scott, & Trinity Rivers from within the Klamath Mtns. makes this the MOST DISECTED MTN. LANDSCAPE IN CAL. also ruggedness = difficult to build dams to control and use water.
- k. Ranges =
Siskiyou, Marble, Scott, South Fork, Salmon, Trinity, and Trinity Alps. el. avg. 5-7,000' Mt. Eddy 9033'.

II. Cultural Geography

- A. Due to rugged topography = little development.
- B. No interstate or other major hwy. through region.
- C. isolation from urban Cal.
- D. keeps would-be residents away.
- E. Interstate 5 skirts area but most people are only passing through en route to Oregon or south to urban Cal.
- F. Both major roads (255 and 96) are narrow and winding and closed sometimes in winter by snowfall.
- G. Recreation - camping and fishing. Major areas are Shasta-Trinity- Whiskeytown Nat. Rec. Area and Marble Mtn. and Salmon-Trinity Wilderness.
- H. No cities as such in the Klamath Mtns. only small towns. (populations are in the 3000 range)

- I. Lumber main industry, plus: ranching, fishing, tourism, recreation, and retirement communities.
- J. Very limited agriculture. Exception = Scott Valley area ranching and hay farming.
- K. Native Americans = Hoopa Valley Reservation; goes down the Klamath R. to the sea- = largest in Cal. and most prosperous.
- L. History - Native Americans
 - 1. Fish, acorns and game plentiful
 - 2. Great ethnic complexity
 - Athapaskan, Algonquin, Hokan, Yukian and Penutain linguistic groups represented in the area.
 - 3. Today only 5-6000 live in their homeland.
- M. History - Early Settlements
 - 1. Spain not interested until Russians opened Ft. Ross (1809). Then they founded mission Sonoma in 1823.
 - 2. Anglo- Americans
 - a) Gold - Trinity River 1848 (Scott Valley, Trinity Canyon, & around Weaverville:
 - One of worlds largest hydrolic mining operations.
 - b) Gold = development of seaports along N. Coast
 - c) Many became farmers and stayed after gold played out.
 - d) Redwood lumbering 1854 = 7 mills in Eureka.
- N. Economy Today
 - 1. Lumbering = leading statewide. Main reason why Ca. and Wash. are tied for second after Oregon as largest in lumber prod.
 - a) Humboldt Co. leader in reserves of standing timber and in state lumber output.
 - b) Consuming lumber faster than nature can replace it.
 - Ca. Saw timber (billions of board feet)

Reserve	Annual Cut	Annual Growth
303.91	5.72	3.53
 - c) Heyday 1941-55. Since then fewer mills, larger operations, corporate control, automation, land aquisition.
 - d) 1/10 of harvest = plywood production.
 - e) No more burning waste; sent to Japan for pulp proc.
 - f) Redwood - most forests are on private property.
 - 2. Fishing - ranks below southern and central Cal. in both commercial and sport fishing
 - a) chief source for flounder (sole), rockfish, tuna, salmon.
 - b) state leader in shellfish - over 1/3 of state total catch in crab, abalone.
 - 3. Livestock Ranching - land good for little else. Some sheep and cattle - transhumance not practiced as much as was historically.
 - 4. Mining - Historically - 150 million in gold removed. Not much going on today. Hydrologic mining was legislated out of existence in 1800's.
 - 5. Commerce
 - a) deep sea- Eureka & Cresent City: export wood prod.
 - b) poor roads through area
 - c) no current railroad operating
 - Marin to Eureka 1907; stopped in 1958.
 - Skunk RR. diesel-gasoline passanger-freight cars are popular with tourists. 40 mile run Ft. Bragg- Willits
 - 6. Tourism
 - Some state parks and beaches, good hunting & fishing etc

END