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Nothing in nature lives for itself.

Seven Sacred Sites in California

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University of Minnesota grapples with reparation demands from tribes over land

Bloody tool reveals Oregon may have been home to some of the earliest humans in North America

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Red Lake Nation to open Minnesota's first recreational marijuana dispensary

A page from True West Magazine



[NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY](#) ·

[Native Americans](#) ·

Nothing in nature lives for itself.

Rivers don't drink their own water.

Trees don't eat their own fruit.

Sun doesn't give heat for itself.

Flowers don't spread fragrance for themselves.

Living for others is the rule of nature. And therein lies the secret of living.

Seven Sacred Sites in California

These landmarks are not just breathtakingly beautiful—they also carry spiritual significance for Native Americans



MBRubin/Getty Images

While travelers from all over the world marvel at the grandeur of California's landscapes, for indigenous people the state's mountain peaks, waterfalls, and other natural landmarks have a deeper cultural and spiritual significance. Beyond their beauty, these features hold symbolic and mythical meanings and, to this day, serve as sites for ceremonies and rituals that help California's native peoples maintain an enduring connection with their ancestors.

Numerous locations throughout California hold spiritual significance. Many, however, are understandably kept secret or don't have established public access. So the places listed below were chosen both for their cultural prominence and because they're primarily on state, local, or national park land. As you visit these destinations for hikes or mountain bike rides, please treat them with respect. And if you do come upon a Native American ceremony, act as respectfully as you would behave in any other house of worship.

Old Woman Mountains Preserve (Mamápukaiv)

At a meeting point of three American deserts—the Mojave, Great Basin, and Colorado—Mamápukaiv is a landscape sacred to the Nuwuvi (Southern Paiute) and other California desert tribes. Now managed by the [Native American Land Conservancy](#) (with the support of the [Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians](#)) as the 2,560-acre [Old Woman Mountains Preserve](#), this area southwest of Needles is unique both for its natural and cultural history.

With pine, juniper, and wild grapevines, as well as wildlife including bighorn sheep and deer, it's anything but a barren desert wasteland. There are ancient trails and such cultural sites as the 800-year-old petroglyphs at Painted Rock. The location's cultural prominence is evident by its inclusion in the [Salt Song Trail](#) (*Asi Huviav*), a 142-cycle traditional song that describes the journey of two sisters between sacred spots scattered across Nuwuvi lands.

In a [Mojave Project article](#) about the Salt Song, artist and writer Kim Stringfellow quotes Kaibab Paiute elder Vivienne Jake, who said, "Salt Songs are a cultural and spiritual bond between the Nuwuvi people and the land, and represent a renewal and healing spiritual journey."

Morro Rock (Northern Chumash: Lisamu'; Salinan: Le'Samo)

Considered a high spiritual place for the [Northern Chumash](#) and [Salinan](#) peoples, 576-foot Morro Rock rises from the ocean at the entrance to [Morro Bay](#). Home to nesting peregrine falcons (a Salinan legend featuring a falcon is set here) and the last in a chain of nine volcanic formations

that begins near [San Luis Obispo](#), Morro Rock, despite its sacred role, has endured more than its share of abuse.

In the late 1800s and into the 1900s, as much as 40 percent of the majestic rock was dynamited, hacked, and quarried to build the breakwater at nearby Port San Luis and for other projects. But Morro Rock is becoming whole again.

During a repair project at the Port San Luis breakwater, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that it would need larger pieces of stone to meet modern design standards. That meant much of the stone originally taken from Morro Rock couldn't be reused. With that determination, [the Chumash began working with the Corps and other government agencies](#) to reunite the old breakwater material with Morro Rock itself.

In August 2022, 10,000 tons of boulders were barged to an underwater spot about 1,500 feet offshore from Morro Rock to create an artificial seamount and reef habitat for marine life. As Violet Sage Walker, chair of the Northern Chumash Tribal Council, said, "The reunification of Lisamu' represents a healing of our people and our culture—a healing that is long overdue."

While the public can observe the Salinan conduct ritual climbs of Morro Rock at the summer and winter solstice (the Northern Chumash oppose the practice), access to the formation itself is strictly prohibited. But you can walk near the base, and there are spectacular views of Morro Rock from points in town and [Morro Strand State Beach](#) just to the north.

Mount Diablo (Tuyshtak)

At 3,849 feet, Mount Diablo near [Walnut Creek](#) is a modest mountain by California standards. But because of its isolated position, surrounded by lower hills in the Coast Range and close to the western edge of the [Central Valley](#), this peak that commands [Mount Diablo State Park](#) has views that extend 200 miles. And its summit is visible from spots throughout Northern California.

Despite a demonic sounding name bestowed by the Spanish, Mount Diablo had a very different symbolism for the many Native American tribes in the area that revered it. *Tuyshtak*, the [Ohlone](#) name for the peak, means "dawn of time." According to the park website, the Julpun believed the mountain was the birthplace of the world, while the Northern Miwok "saw it as supernatural being that brought light to a dark world."

According to tribal elders, Mount Diablo's summit was used both for Pomo and Wintun religious ceremonies, as well as by individuals who came to the mountain to pray. These days you can drive directly to the top of the peak, although it's far more satisfying to follow the 7-mile round trip Summit Trail, or a combination of different hiking routes to reach the summit.

Tolay Lake

One of [Sonoma County](#)'s largest freshwater lakes, Tolay Lake is a spiritual center for the Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo tribes, whose ancestors were part of the Alaguali Nation. Located about eight miles from [Petaluma](#), the lake, which fills during the rainy season and is now part of 3,400-acre [Tolay Lake Regional Park](#), has historically been a significant ceremonial gathering

spot and healing place. When the shallow lake was drained in the 1870s, thousands of charmstones—small objects used for healing, fertility, and other purposes—were found along the bottom. Some of the charmstones were more than 4,000 years old.

On the park website, Greg Sarris, chairman of the [Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria](#), explained the lake's cultural significance. "The lake and surrounding area was highly sacred and was considered one of three areas in all of Northern California where Indian doctors from different tribes convened for sacred ceremonies and the exchange of ritual objects and songs for the purpose of healing." The park has an 11-mile trail network for hiking and mountain biking with spectacular views of San Pablo Bay and all the way to San Francisco. There's also excellent wildlife viewing, especially for birds of prey. And in recent years, the Tolay Fall Festival has featured Alaguali cultural activities, while the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria have also hosted events at the parks.

Lassen Peak (Kohm Yah-Mah-Yee)

Long before the arrival of Europeans, the Achumawi, Atsugewi, Mountain Maidu, and Yahi/Yana peoples lived in the northeast California area now encompassed by [Lassen Volcanic National Park](#). The archaeological record reveals evidence of human activity here at least as far back as 7,500 years ago. During summer, the four tribes gathered foods at higher elevations before returning to their villages at lower elevations with the arrival of winter. The descendants of these original inhabitants still live nearby and consider the entire park a sacred place, particularly 10,457-foot Lassen Peak, which holds a special spiritual significance.

To learn more about the native cultures of the park, stop into the [Kohm Yah-mah-nee Visitor Center](#), located one mile from the park's Southwest Entrance. In the Mountain Maidu language, the name *Kohn Yah-mah-nee* means "Snow Mountain," and this was the [first national park](#) visitor center to receive a tribal name.

McArthur-Burney Falls

Anyone who has ever watched the delicate veils of water cascade down a 129-foot-tall moss-cloaked cliff face, then create rainbows over the cerulean pool at the base of McArthur-Burney Falls, would agree that this is a magical place. This transcendently beautiful spot is the centerpiece of [McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park](#) near the small town of Burney and about 64 miles northeast of [Redding](#).

The Ilmawi, the first people to see the waterfall, considered it sacred, as do their modern-day descendants in the [Pit River Tribe](#). According to a state parks document, "The falls were a source of good luck and power if one led a spiritually clean life," and are still a site for pilgrimages and coming-of-age ceremonies.

Mount Shasta (Waka-nunee-Tuki-Wuki and Uhataahkoo)

Rising to 14,162 feet with a triangular, snowcapped summit visible from a vast area of Northern California, [Mount Shasta](#) plays a central role in the culture and religious traditions of the region's indigenous peoples. The area's tribes, including members of the [Karuk](#), [Pit River](#), Shasta, and [Wintu](#), still conduct traditional rituals at sacred places along the slopes and within the forests of this vast volcanic peak—the second tallest in the Cascade Range. According to the Sacred Sites

International Foundation, this mountain in the [Shasta-Trinity National Forest](#) is part of the creation stories of several tribes, while the Shasta Nation regards it as the birthplace of the Earth.

Because of their cultural significance, areas above the tree line have been designated as the Mount Shasta Cosmological District and, along with the mountain's Panther Meadows, are considered eligible for inclusion on the National Historic Register of Historic Places.

The public is not invited to the ceremonies that take place at [Mount Shasta](#). But you can explore on an extensive trail network, and there's a walk-in [campground](#) (Mount Shasta's highest) at Panther Meadows.

~~~~~  
*Heidi Barlese Nixon, NV (2017)*

*I am reminded today, that I am here to share all that has been passed down to me (numuwae). I've been teaching the children our language, and have recently begun to share stories. I also throw in some History, and talk about Respect.*

*Listened to my Dad talk about Jim Winnemucca, and how he dreamed the soldiers were coming. The other leaders didn't believe him, but he sent his people up into the mountains anyway. The soldiers came, and those that stayed, some were killed. A powerful man, who rode in circles around the Soldiers, let them shoot at him, and came away unscathed. Anyways, have a good day.*

~~~~~  
You can still get a sense of awe from looking at these remarkable places...



distinctlymontana.com

[Montana's Magnificent Buffalo Jumps](#)

[Montana's native tribes relied on the bounty of bison in nearly every aspect of their daily lives. In addition to depending on them as a primary food source, native peoples also developed ingenious methods that enabled them to use every part of these colossal one-ton giants.](#)

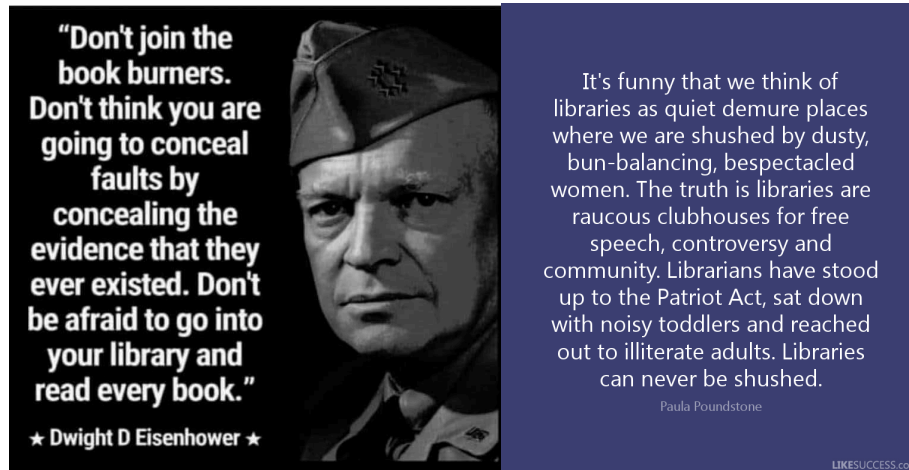
University of Minnesota grapples with reparation demands from tribes over land | MinnPost

<https://www.minnpost.com/education/2023/07/university-of-minnesota-grapples-with-reparation-demands-from-tribes-who-say-they-were-victims-of-land-grabs/>

A bloody tool reveals Oregon may have been home to some of the earliest humans in North America

Rimrock Draw Rockshelter, outside of Riley in Central Oregon and where the discovery was made, has been home to excavation efforts since 2011.

Read in USA TODAY: <https://apple.news/An0aXykSARL6pqE4NmXICgQ>



“Don’t join the book burners. Don’t think you are going to conceal faults by concealing the evidence that they ever existed. Don’t be afraid to go into your library and read every book.”
★ Dwight D Eisenhower ★

It’s funny that we think of libraries as quiet demure places where we are shushed by dusty, bun-balancing, bespectacled women. The truth is libraries are raucous clubhouses for free speech, controversy and community. Librarians have stood up to the Patriot Act, sat down with noisy toddlers and reached out to illiterate adults. Libraries can never be shushed.

Paula Poundstone

LIKESUCCESS.com

And This Summer, Share Your UC Berkeley Memories with Us!

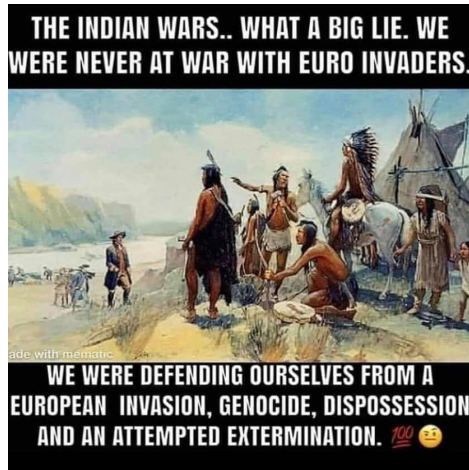
Reminisce and finish the following sentence with any stories, anecdotes, memories, or facts about your time as a student at UC Berkeley: “When I was at UC Berkeley...”

‘Resolved to Continue’: Cal Alumni Association Statement on Supreme Court’s Decision

How the Cal Alumni Association has been taking action since Prop. 209 and how alumni can work alongside us.

We will continue to be fiercely persistent in our efforts to uplift those who have been historically marginalized, regardless of the obstacles that step in our way.”

—Susie Cohen Crumpler, executive director of the Cal Alumni Association



Washoe library board chair not reappointed after concerns raised over Drag Queen Story Hour

"We have a very dire situation where we're losing community members who are afraid to step up in these positions because of the lack of decorum that is found in our chambers," Mariluz Garcia said. by **Mark Robison**

<https://www.rgj.com/story/news/2023/07/12/washoe-commission-rejects-library-trustee-after-contentious-meeting/70407917007/>

Opportunity for community member to sit on board.

Testing found high levels of lead in Lake Tahoe near locations where AT&T buried underwater lead cables. In Emerald Bay, a sample contained an amount of lead 2,533 times the EPA limit for drinking water. A young child swimming in such water could add 7.4 micrograms per deciliter of lead to his or her blood, more than double the threshold the CDC uses to identify children with lead exposure. [The Wall Street Journal](#) published an investigation on how telecom giants have left behind a sprawling network of toxic lead cables across the U.S.

Congressional Research Service

SUMMARY

Management of the Colorado River: Water Allocations, Drought, and the Federal Role

<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/r/r45546>

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Extract:

Tribal Water Rights Settlements and Leasing

Many tribal water rights are senior to other water rights in the basin, and thus are likely to play an important role in the future of the Colorado River. The extent to which tribes develop their water rights, or are willing and able to market their water to other users, has ramifications for water availability in the basin. The 117th Congress authorized a new Indian water rights settlement related to one tribe's rights to Colorado River water (the Hualapai Settlement,) and enacted a new authority for the Colorado River Indian Tribes, one of the largest water rights holders on the river, to enter into agreements to lease a portion of the tribes' Colorado River water (the Colorado River Indian Tribes Water Resiliency Act of 2022.).¹⁴⁵ As previously noted, Congress has approved Indian water rights settlements associated with more than 2.5 MAF of tribal diversion rights on the Colorado River (these rights are a subset of the water allocations per state in which they are located); a portion of this water has been developed to date. Congress may be asked to consider new settlements that would add to this total.



The City of Airdrie

Updated: Here is a sneak peek into the installation of Indigenous Peoples' sculptures called "Stoney Grandmother's Teachings" at Nose Creek Regional Park today. These sculptures were anonymously donated to the city from an Airdrie family who selected local artists Don and Shirley Begg to create them.

The sculptures depict an "îethka" or Stoney grandmother around 1909, when Airdrie was established, sharing her traditional knowledge of local vegetation with her grandchildren. This artwork was created to honour those Peoples who have been in relationship with this land since time immemorial and continue to live in the City of Airdrie, in the surrounding rural districts and in First Nations communities throughout the Treaty 7 Region of Alberta, as well as the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3.

A dedication ceremony for these sculptures will be held on September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

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**Red Lake Nation to open Minnesota's first recreational marijuana dispensary Aug. 1**

<https://www.startribune.com/red-lake-nation-to-open-minnesotas-first-recreational-marijuana-dispensary-aug-1-cannabis/600289445/>

I DON'T LIKE SNOW. IT'S WHITE.



AND IT'S ON MY LAND.

### Raiding White Man's Heaven

During one interview with Apache historian Eve Ball, Asa Daklugie (nephew of Geronimo and son of Chief Juh) described the land of Ussen or Apache Heaven.

Daklugie told Ball that she needed to stay in their heaven, a place so serene and beautiful; no noise, pure rushing water, rugged mountains, tall pines. White Man's Heaven was loud, too many people and big cities, pollution, just the opposite of theirs.

Ball laughed and agreed with the warrior, but she claimed, "Well, all that you say may be true, but I love books and libraries. I could not be happy without them."

Daklugie smiled wickedly, with a gleam in his eye, and responded, "Well, Ms. Ball that is no problem for an Apache. We will just make a raid on the White Man's Heaven and bring you all the books you want!"

—Lynda A. Sánchez



—COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS—

*Columbus didn't know where he was going, didn't know where he had been, and did it all on somebody else's money. And the white man has been following Columbus ever since.*

—Vine Deloria Jr.

### Blubber Lover

I grew up in a village of about 269 people, just south of the Aleutian Islands. I come from a very close knit community, and we celebrate all the time. Birthdays, weddings, graduations, elections, impeachments. We even celebrate when one of our bootleggers gets out of jail; we hold a big party, with seal meat, rabbit and, of course, the blubber—the food of gods! Next to the luncheon meat we get from the monthly commodos [In-din slang for "commodities"], nothing beats blubber.

—Crow historian Alden Big Man Jr.

*Every time my old, late friend Floyd Red Crow Westerman was introduced to someone who claimed a Cherokee grandmother, he would turn them around and look at their butt and say, "I can usually tell by the high cheekbones."*

—Musician Bobby Bridger, who, with actor Wes Studi, is producing the audiobook of Vine Deloria Jr.'s final book, *The World We Used to Live In*:

Remembering the Powers of the  
Medicine Men

*The idea that  
Indians aren't funny  
is so funny.*

—History professor Paul Andrew Hutton



\*Nellie Davis \*  
Owner + Creative Healer  
Book at [outsidershair.com](http://outsidershair.com)

Slow it on down, folks. I try to check my email beginning and end of each day, sometimes less. And not regularly on the weekends. I encourage y'all to live it up (in real life) and do the same. We've all heard the story of who wins the race.

