



A Van and Airplane Tour of the West

What are the features that have drawn people to the West?

Introduction

Aloha! My name is Ms. Yoshida and I will be your guide for our tour of the West. I was born and raised in Hawaii. As you probably can tell from my greeting, the word *aloha* is used for “hello” in the Hawaiian language. We also use it to say “good-bye.”

I am a college student here on the mainland. My main interests are political science and government. Someday, I hope to win an election to the United States Congress and represent the people of Hawaii.

On school breaks, I work as a tour guide. It’s a great job, because I get to meet all kinds of people while seeing beautiful places. We will be visiting several different states, starting in Montana and finishing in Hawaii. Whenever we visit someplace new, I want you to think about two questions: What first attracted people to this place? And why are people still coming here?

For most of our tour, we will travel in vans. But we will also fly in airplanes to two stops.

Do you hear that honk? That means it’s time for us to hit the road.

Social Studies Vocabulary

expedition

geyser

gorge

pass

technology

◀ Miles of highways, like this one, allow people to travel across the Rocky Mountains.



Civics



Economics

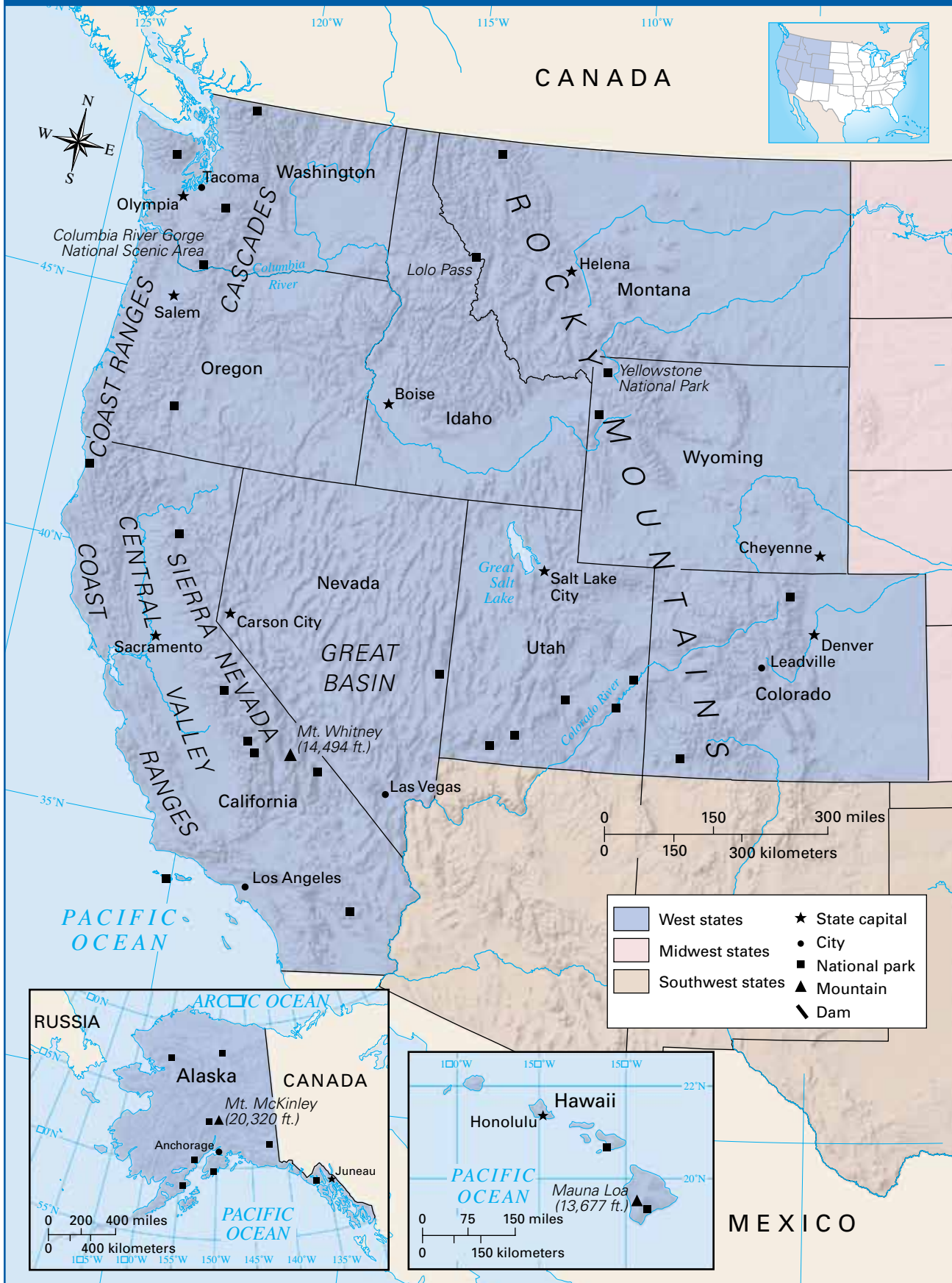


Geography



History

The West Region



The West: A Region of Roadways





The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail follows the path of the explorers and their historic trip. This old cabin lies along the Trail.

pass a route across the mountains

expedition a journey with a purpose

1. Lolo Pass, Montana: A Stop on the Lewis and Clark Trail

Our first stop is Lolo Pass in the Rocky Mountains. A **pass** is a route across mountains. In 1805, a group of 33 very hungry travelers crossed this pass.

The travelers were part of an **expedition**, or a journey with a purpose, led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. The Lewis and Clark expedition had two goals. The first goal was to find an all-water route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. The travelers failed to achieve this goal because such a route does not exist.

Their second goal was to explore the lands west of the Mississippi. This goal Lewis and Clark achieved very well. Their maps and journals gave Americans their first good look at the region we now call the West.

When Lewis and Clark reached Lolo Pass, they were almost out of food. All they had left was a soup mix that everybody hated. The men survived by eating candles, bear oil, and two of their horses.

Today, people come to this part of Montana to hike and fish. Some come to follow the Lewis and Clark Trail to the Pacific. Luckily for these travelers, they don't have to eat candles or that awful soup to survive.

2. Wyoming's Yellowstone National Park

Lewis and Clark saw a lot of sights on their expedition, but they missed the **geysers** of Yellowstone National Park. A geyser is a spring that shoots hot water and steam into the air.

Geysers are like “nature’s teakettles.” Water is heated deep inside the Earth. When the water gets hot enough, it hisses and boils just like a teakettle on a stove. What happens when this boiling water reaches the Earth’s surface? It shoots into the air.

There are about 10,000 hot springs, mud volcanoes, steam vents, and geysers in Yellowstone. A geyser named Old Faithful erupts in a cloud of steam about every 90 minutes.

Fur trappers were some of the first Americans to see Yellowstone. They told stories of steaming springs and erupting geysers. Later on, a photographer took pictures of the geysers. People were impressed with the photographs. Many people wanted to protect the geysers and the beautiful land around them from development. In 1872, the U.S. government created Yellowstone National Park to do just that. It was the first national park in the world.

Only 300 people visited Yellowstone the year it became a park. But today, the park is very popular and more than 3 million people come to Wyoming to visit Yellowstone each year. Visitors enjoy the beauty of Yellowstone’s mountains and meadows.

geyser a spring that throws jets of heated water and steam into the air

Yellowstone National Park was created to protect the geysers, like Old Faithful, and land from development. This was the birth of the U.S. national park system.





Leadville, Colorado, was once a booming mining town. This wooden entrance leads to a mine under a hillside.

3. Leadville, Colorado: The West's Richest Silver Mining Town

Welcome to historic Leadville, Colorado. Look ahead and you'll see the entrance to an old mine.

Leadville sits high in the Rocky Mountains, and at nearly 10,200 feet, it is one of our country's highest cities. In the past, it was also the West's wildest and richest silver mining town.

Miners first came to this area looking for gold. They found some. Soon, however, gold became harder to find. In the 1870s, people began to take a closer look at that pesky sand that filled the area. Guess what they found? The sand was rich in both lead and silver!

The discovery of silver brought good times to Leadville. The city grew rapidly as miners flocked to the area. Then, in 1893, the silver boom ended. For a time, it looked as though Leadville would become an empty ghost town.

But Leadville was lucky because other valuable minerals were found in this area. One is molybdenum, a metal used to make high-strength steel. The town survived.

Today, Leadville is a tourist center. Some people come to learn about the history of this rich mining area. Others come to ski in winter or fish and hike in summer.

4. Sunny Southern California's Movie Industry

Watch your step! Look down at your feet and you will see stars set into the sidewalk. We are walking down Hollywood Boulevard. On this street, special movie, television, and music stars are honored with a star and their names placed in the sidewalk. We're in Los Angeles, California, and Hollywood Boulevard is one of the most famous streets in the world.

Moviemaking is a giant industry in Southern California. America's first movies were made in the Northeast. But moviemakers needed sunny days to film outdoors, and the Northeast is often cloudy and rainy. A few moviemakers found the sunshine they needed in Southern California. Others soon followed.

Today, thousands of people in Southern California work in the movie industry as writers, actors, set designers, and directors. Many more people work in jobs that help the movie industry. Some of these workers make costumes and equipment. Other workers provide important services such as transportation, food, and construction.

Each year, millions of tourists visit Southern California and enjoy its warm, sunny weather. Many of these tourists tour the movie studios, hoping to bump into a movie star!

Movie-making is a major industry in Southern California. Directors, actors, and camera operators are just some of the workers needed to make a movie.



5. California's Central Valley: America's Salad Bowl

Do you snack on raisins? Spread strawberry jam on your toast? Look around you. Those foods probably came from California's Central Valley.

The Central Valley is shaped like a long bathtub. The sides are formed by mountain ranges and the bottom is covered with deep, rich soil. Summers here are long and warm.

Does this sound like a good place to farm? It is, but there is a problem. Almost no rain falls during the growing season.

California has tried to solve this problem by building dams on rivers that flow down from the mountains. In winter, water collects behind the dams. In the summer, farmers use this water to irrigate crops.

Irrigation turned the Central Valley into what people call "America's salad bowl." Farmers here raise more than 250 crops, many of them fruits and vegetables. You probably eat some of them every day.

The Central Valley is also important for the development of farming **technology**. Technology is the use of tools and ideas to meet people's needs. Scientists here have invented many machines to help farmers pick their crops. One is a tomato-picking machine. This technology must be gentle so it won't crush the tomatoes.

technology the use of tools and ideas to meet people's needs

Two major industries of the California Central Valley are farming and the development of farming technology. Here, farmers use a machine to sort many tomatoes at one time.





6. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area

We have reached the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. A **gorge** is a deep, narrow valley with steep walls. The Columbia River cut this beautiful gorge out of rock.

The Columbia River begins in the Rocky Mountains in Canada. It flows 1,200 miles south and west into the Pacific Ocean. For part of its journey, the river forms the boundary between the states of Washington and Oregon.

The Columbia looks lazy here, but don't let that fool you. This is one hardworking river. Dams on the river make a lot of electricity that is used by businesses and homes. And farmers use water from the river to irrigate crops. Columbia River waters irrigate more than 5 million acres of land.

Farmers and businesspeople use the river for transportation. Many goods travel on the Columbia to shipping centers. It is one of the most traveled rivers in the country.

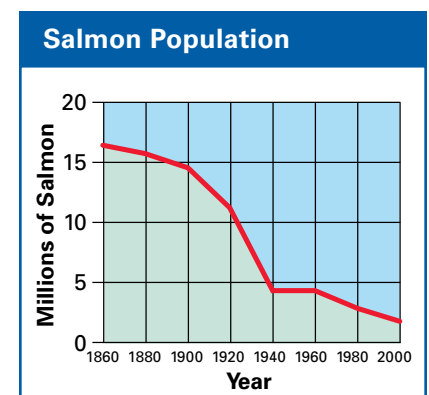
Putting the river to work has been good for people. Both Oregon and Washington are growing rapidly. But the use of the river has been bad for fish—especially salmon.

Since 1850, the number of salmon in the Columbia River has dropped sharply. Do you know why? You'll find out during our stop at the gorge.

The Columbia River created a beautiful gorge with steep valley walls. The river is a source of transportation and electrical power for the people of Oregon and Washington.

gorge a deep, narrow valley

The salmon population has been declining in the Columbia River since the mid-1800s.





The forests of Washington brought lumberjacks to the state. Demand for lumber and paper grew a wood products industry.

7. Forests of Tacoma, Washington

Welcome to Tacoma, Washington. Tacoma was founded 150 years ago as a logging town. Back then, vast forests attracted loggers and lumbermen to this region. A wood products industry quickly grew that produced lumber, cardboard, and paper. Most of these products that were used in our country came from the West.

To get lumber, you have to cut down trees. By 1880, people feared the timber companies would destroy all the forests. The U.S. government stepped in. An 1891 law set aside public land to preserve the forests in the West. These lands are called national forests.

What's the difference between a national park and a national forest? National parks preserve the land. The Forest Service manages our national forests. This can include a limited amount of activities like logging, grazing, and mining.

Together, timber companies and the government managed forests with protection in mind. As old trees were cut, new trees were planted.

The wood products industry is still important to Washington and Tacoma. And people still come to Washington because of its forests. Now they also come to enjoy the protected evergreen trees. They hike, camp, ski, and learn about nature.

Next up: Alaska! We will need to fly to this stop.

8. Anchorage, Alaska: Starting Point of the Iditarod Trail

We are in Anchorage, Alaska. Alaska is by far the largest of the 50 states, yet it has one of the lowest populations of any state. Can you guess why?

One reason is its chilly climate. Alaska is farther from the equator than any other state. This makes parts of Alaska very cold.

People have been attracted to Alaska by its resources. In 1898, gold was discovered near the town of Nome. Within two years, Nome grew to more than 20,000 people. Another rush of people came in the 1960s, when oil was discovered in northern Alaska.

Today, many people come to Alaska to enjoy its open spaces and outdoor activities. A favorite sport here is dogsled racing. Alaskans used to depend on dogsleds to get around in winter. Now, they use airplanes, snowmobiles, and cars.

The most famous dogsled race is the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, held each year in March. The Iditarod Trail begins right here in Anchorage and ends more than 1,000 miles away in Nome. Many teams of dogs and their mushers, or drivers, cover that distance in an amazing 9 to 12 days. No wonder Alaskans call this event the “Last Great Race on Earth.”

The Iditarod Trail in Alaska runs between Anchorage and Nome. Mushers and their dogsled teams race this trail every year.





The state of Hawaii is a series of separate islands easily seen from an airplane.

9. Honolulu, Hawaii: A Tourist Paradise

Step out of the airplane into the warm sunshine. You have just flown from our country's coldest state to one of its warmest. Hawaii lies closer to the equator than any other U.S. state. Its climate is sunny and warm all year round.

Look at beautiful Waikiki Beach in Honolulu, Hawaii. I grew up near here. My father gave me my first surfing lesson at Waikiki. Maybe I'll have a chance to teach you how to surf here.

Today, tourists from all over the world enjoy this sunny beach. Tourism is Hawaii's most important industry, but it wasn't always such a big deal.

A hundred years ago, the main industry on the Hawaiian Islands was raising sugarcane. Hawaii's sugar planters needed lots of workers for their plantations. Those workers came from China, Japan, the Philippines, Portugal, and other countries.

My great-great-grandparents came to Hawaii from Japan around 1890. They planned to work in the sugar fields for a few years and then return home. But they liked Hawaii and decided to stay.



Thousands of tourists enjoy swimming, surfing, and sailing at Waikiki Beach each year. Tourism is Hawaii's number one industry.



My grandfather remembers when jet airplanes began flying to Hawaii in the late 1950s. Before then, you had to arrive by ship. Airplanes made it easier and faster for tourists to come to Hawaii. Today, many jobs in Hawaii are related to tourism. So we are very happy that you are visiting our islands.

A hundred years ago, growing sugarcane was the main industry of the Hawaiian Islands. Sugarcane is still grown today.

Lesson Summary

What an awesome tour! We began high in the Rocky Mountains and ended up on Waikiki Beach. Along the way, we saw eight states.

Remember the questions I asked when we began: What first attracted people to the West? And why are people still coming here?

People first came to the West in search of adventure, opportunity, and sunshine. The West had beautiful places to explore. It had valuable natural resources, such as gold, silver, oil, and lumber. And, it had a climate that attracted farmers and moviemakers.

People still come to the West for adventure, opportunity, and sunshine. The adventures have changed. We now hike and ski in the region where Lewis and Clark once almost starved. The opportunities have changed, too. Today, there are many jobs in the tourism and entertainment industries.

I hope you had fun in the sun on our trip. Aloha!

Nominate Your State

We are all proud of our states. Each state has unique places to visit and special events. What is special about your state? What reasons can you give to help your state win a contest for the Best State in the Nation?

Start by learning about the most popular tourist attractions in the state. These are the places where visitors like to go. There are many Web sites and books with this information. For example, if you live in Kentucky, there is a Web site at www.KentuckyTourism.com. No matter what you are interested in, there's a place for you! There are Mammoth Cave National Park, the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory, the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park, and the Muhammad Ali Center. Most tourist places have a Web site that is set up to tell you things to do and see and places to eat and stay.

Read about your state's tourist spots. Take notes about the features that excite you. If you want opinions about a place, you can look on travel-advice Web sites. These give

opinions from people who have visited the places. Remember that one person may complain about a tourist attraction and another may call the same place "super fun."

Find photos of your favorite tourist spots. Paste them into a digital presentation document, or print and paste them on a blank poster.

Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky. A model of his family's log cabin is inside this building at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Park.



Kentucky State Symbols



Flag



Bird: Cardinal



Horse: Thoroughbred



Flower: Goldenrod

Celebrations and Symbols

Now find sources that talk about special celebrations in your state. In Kentucky, you might learn about a Daniel Boone Festival by searching for its Web site on the Internet. The Web site has separate pages that describe the festival's date, events, history, and location.

What special celebrations are in your state? Add photos and information about them to your presentation.

Finally, find the symbols of your state. Symbols are state birds, flowers, and other state favorites. An encyclopedia is a good source for this information. Look up the state and you will likely find pictures of the state symbols. Your state's Web site may also have this information. Once you find them, print or draw pictures of your state symbols.

Now make a presentation to your classmates about why your state deserves to be named Best State in the Nation. Include information and pictures of fun and interesting tourist spots and celebrations. Be sure to also highlight your state's symbols.

Here are some of the state symbols of Kentucky.



Exploring the Pacific Crest Trail

At one end is the Mexican border and at the other end is Canada. In between stretches the Pacific Crest Trail. The trail rambles across deserts, over mountains, and along lakeshores. What can this trail teach us about the West?

The Pacific Crest Trail runs from Mexico to Canada. The trail preserves some of the most beautiful wild areas in the western states.

In the 1930s, Clinton C. Clarke began to support an idea: building a hiking trail from Mexico to Canada. Its path would follow the Pacific Crest, a ridge of mountains running through California, Oregon, and Washington. Clarke wanted to preserve some of the beautiful wild areas of the West and help people enjoy the outdoors.

Making Clarke's idea happen was difficult. Some parts of the trail were already in place, but much of it was little more than a line on a map. The line showed the basic direction the trail would follow. But someone needed to walk and mark the trail Clarke had mapped.

The person chosen for that job was a young man named Warren Rogers. As a child, Rogers had gotten a terrible disease called polio that had harmed his legs. Though he walked with a limp, Rogers still loved hiking and climbing.

In 1935, Clarke organized hikers into teams. For the next four summers, Rogers led the teams in exploring different parts of the trail. The teams took notes on what they found, and they mapped a good route for the trail.

Rogers reached the end of the route in 1938, but it took decades of work before the trail itself was fully built. Not until 1993 did workers finally complete the Pacific Crest Trail.





Hikers face challenging terrain at many places along the Pacific Crest Trail. Even in summer, hikers can find snow and ice.

Walking the Trail

Let's hike the Pacific Crest Trail. We will need to start in the spring and end in the fall because climbing the trail's mountains in the winter is too dangerous. We will also need to move quickly. To finish our hike we must cover about 15 miles each day.

The trail in Southern California is hot and dry, and winds through desert-like areas and over small mountains. Watch out for rattlesnakes!

The Sierra Nevada of central California is breathtaking. We are hiking between 8,000 and 13,000 feet above sea level. Brrrr! You usually find snow and ice here—even in midsummer. This stretch of trail is very wild. We might hike for 200 miles without crossing a road. Look out for coyotes, deer, and bears!

The Cascade Range will take us through Northern California, Oregon, and into Washington. These mountains were made by volcanoes. The forests here are thick and lush. The trail passes by many lakes and streams. We cross from Oregon to Washington through the beautiful Columbia River Gorge.

Get out your rain gear now because the Northern Cascades have very rainy weather. The wet climate helps rich forests grow. It also helps huckleberry bushes grow. If the time is right, we can feast on berries—a tasty end to our trip.



The Pacific Crest Trail offers hikers a dramatic view of the Cascade Range. Lewis and Clark named this peak Mount Jefferson to honor their president.

History Along the Trail

Hikers on the Pacific Crest Trail see beautiful scenery, but they also take a historical journey. The trail passes a number of key places in the history of the West.

Mount Jefferson, in the Cascades of Oregon, honors President Thomas Jefferson. In the early 1800s, it was Jefferson who picked Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the nation's new territory in the West. Jefferson had purchased this land, called the Louisiana Territory, from France. Lewis and Clark mapped much of the territory, including areas along the Pacific Crest. On their trip, they named a mountain after the president.

High in the Sierra Nevada, the Pacific Crest Trail climbs through the Donner Pass. Here, in 1846, a group of settlers tried to cross the mountains as they moved west. Snowstorms forced them to spend a terrible winter in the mountains, and many of them died. The famous story of the Donner party reminds us of the challenges faced by early settlers of the West.

The trail also passes through gold country. In 1848, a man named James Marshall found gold in California. Thousands of gold-seekers flocked there to get rich. The gold rush changed the West forever. It brought new people and ideas to the region. New settlers built towns into great cities such as San Francisco and Sacramento. These settlers helped create the modern states we know today.

Walking the John Muir Trail

A special path runs near the Pacific Crest Trail in the Sierra Nevada. It is known as the John Muir Trail.

John Muir lived in the late 1800s and early 1900s. He deeply loved the outdoors and believed strongly in protecting the nation's great natural wonders. Muir was a leader of the effort to create our national parks. "Wildness," he said, "is a necessity."

Muir traveled widely. He explored parts of the United States—and beyond. But his favorite place on Earth was the Sierra Nevada, which he called the "range of light." Muir said that it was "the most divinely beautiful of all the mountain chains I have ever seen."

The John Muir Trail gives hikers a chance to experience the wilderness as John Muir did. The land around the trail looks very much as it did in the past. Hikers on this isolated trail catch a glimpse into the history of the West. They get to see the natural wonders that make this part of our country so special. ♦



John Muir believed in protecting the wilderness.

Hikers on the John Muir Trail see the Sierra Nevada much as Muir did. These mountains were one of his favorite places on Earth.

