

Inyo County

**The Inyo County Courthouse in Independence.
Part 1 of 4: Bishop, Mt. White, Owen's Gorge, Lone Pine, Big
Pine, Independence.**



Inyo County

Inyo County Data

Population: 17,945 (Rank: 52)

Land Area (square miles): 10,203 (Rank: 2)

There is only one way to drive through Inyo County. Highway 395 follows the Owens Valley, which splits the county in two. It is a dramatic drive. To the west are the Sierras that rise straight up from the valley floor. These are the highest Sierras featuring Mt. Whitney at 14,496 feet, the highest mountain in the lower 48, and 12 other mountains over 14,000 feet.

The Sierras are a fault block mountain range. This is a huge mass of rock that is uplifted along the Owens Valley and tipped toward the Central Valley. From the western or valley side you drive across a rock mass that is gradually eroding and the ascent is gradual. From the eastern side you see the edge of this massive piece of granite as it tilts up. There are no foothills. The Sierras have risen up along a fault that runs along the valley floor. It is from the east side that a person understands how rugged, steep and high the Sierras are.

This is still an active fault. In 1872 a massive earthquake took place at Lone Pine, killing 23 people. To the north near Mammoth Lake there has been earthquake activity.

To the east are the Inyo mountains and north of Big Pine, the White Mountains. The White Mountains are home to the bristlecone pine, the oldest living thing on earth.

The entire county is in the rain shadow of the Sierras. There is little rain and snowfall to the east of the Sierras. The county is part of the Great Basin desert. To the east

Introduction

California is comprised of 58 counties. The state, the third largest in the U.S., has the greatest diversity of geography of any of the states. It has huge deserts, high mountain ranges, fertile valleys and a 1000 mile coastline. Beginning in 2001 my wife and I began to travel and photograph the state as a retirement hobby.

In 2009 we published a CD containing about 4,000 photos of the regions of the state. Since that time we have added about 10,000 more photos to our collection. It was also at this time (December 2008) I began to send a photographic diary of our trips to friends and people with an interest in California geography.

Now we are organizing our collection by county using all of our photos dating back to 2001.

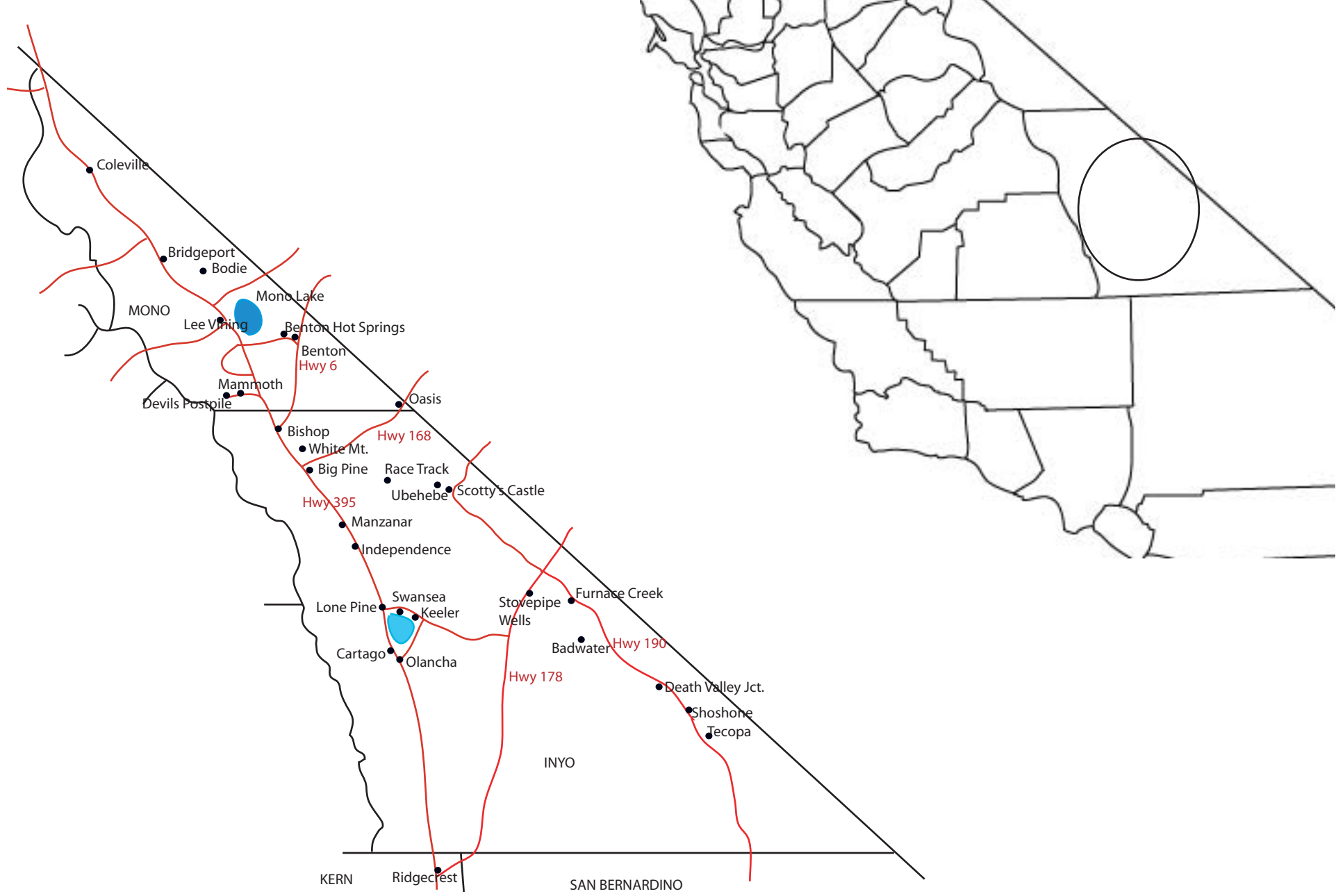
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of the Inyo Mountains is Death Valley National Park. The town of Lone Pine is the entrance to both Death Valley and Mt. Whitney.

The Owens River flows through the valley. At the southern end of the valley is Owens Lake. This lake, which was once 30 miles long, has only a small amount of water in it.

Cities: Bishop. Towns: Independence, Cartago, Olan-cha, Keeler, Lone Pine, Death Valley Junction, Furnace Creek, Stovepipe Wells.

Inyo County



Bishop

Bishop is the only incorporated city in Inyo County. The county seat however is Independence. The population is 3,879. (October 2003)



Bishop

(October 2003)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Bishop

(September 2007)



A large mural on the side of a building in Durango, Colorado, depicting a religious scene with Father J.J. Dowley, a landscape with mountains, a lake, and vintage cars. A cross with the name 'FATHER J.J. DOWLEY' is visible in the foreground.

A large mural on the side of a building in Ouray, Colorado, depicting a historical scene. The mural features a priest in a red and white robe, a vintage car, and a mountain range in the background. A cross-shaped sign in the foreground reads "FATHER J.J. DOWLEY". The mural is painted on a wall that is part of a larger building with a flat roof. The scene is set in a parking lot with a paved area in the foreground.

Bishop

(May 2011)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Bishop

(September 2007)



Paiute Shoshone Cultural Center

The Paiutes have a large investment in Bishop. There is a medical center and a casino. The cultural center for some reason was empty. (May 2011)



Paiute Shoshone Cultural Center

(May 2011)



Lake Crowley

Lake Crowley stores water destined for Los Angeles. It is named for Father Crowley, a Catholic priest famous for promoting the Owens Valley. (September 2007)



Owens River Gorge

The dam is located in the gorge. There was no one here when we visited but we felt that we were being spied on. Sure enough we found a guard with binoculars watching us from a hill top. Los Angeles Water and Power! (September 2007)



Owens River Gorge

(September 2007)



Owens Valley and the Sierra

The Owens Valley as seen from White Mountain. The crest of the Sierra in this area is called the Parapet. The floor of the Valley is about 6,000 feet high. The crest of the Sierra is about 14,000 feet high. It is the deepest valley in North America. (September 2007)



White Mountains

This is about 11,000 feet -- about the height of the tree line. (September 2007)



White Mountains

The Bristlecone Pines are the oldest living things on earth. They live to be four to five thousand years old. (September 2007)



White Mountains

Bristlecones live at about 10,000 to 11,000 feet—where the tree line is.
(September 2007)



White Mountains

(September 2007)



White Mountains

Talus or broken rocks at the top of the mountain. (September 2007)



White Mountains

The trail through the Bristlecone Grove looking west to the Sierra.
(September 2007)



White Mountains

(September 2007)



White Mountains

Larry on the edge of White mountain. You have to hike about 1,000 feet up from the parking lot to go through the stand of Bristlecones. (September 2007)



White Mountains

Looking from White Mountain across to the Sierra parapet.
(September 2007)



Deep Springs Ranch

The ranch is a college as well as a working cattle ranch. It takes in about two dozen students – all male. Tuition is fully paid by the school which was founded by an old engineer. It is a two year college and nearly all the young men go on to elite schools. (September 2007)



Deep Springs Valley

The Deep Springs Ranch and College is to the left in the photo. (September 2007)



Deep Springs Valley Ranch

Deep Springs College is the most unusual in the world. The students do ranch work part of the day and attend classes the rest of the time. The faculty lives on campus. (September 2007)



Big Pine

Big Pine received its first post office in 1870. Its population is 1,756. (October 2003)



Big Pine

(October 2003)



Big Pine

(October 2003)



Independence

A trading post was founded here in 1861. A post office was established in 1866. The population is 669. Independence is the county seat. (October 2003)



Independence

(October 2003)



Independence

(October 2003)



Independence

This is the home of Mary Austin. She was a famous writer about the west. (October 2003)



Independence

This fancy building belongs to Los Angeles Water and Power which owns the canal that transports water from the Owens Valley to Los Angeles. (October 2003)



Independence

You will note that the name Los Angeles is missing from the front of the building. There are still hard feelings about the transfer of water. (October 2003)



Manzanar

During World War II Japanese Americans were interned in camps across the West. Manzanar was one of them. Only the gates and some foundations remain. (October 2003)



Independence

(October 2003)



Lone Pine

Lone Pine, as are all the towns, is located along Highway 395. Lone Pine is famous for being an old movie location. Cowboy movies were shot here in the 30's and 40's. A movie festival is held here each Fall. (October 2003)



Lone Pine

We were here during the movie festival and many of the attendees dress in western garb. (October 2003)



Lone Pine

The Lone Pine Post Office opened in 1870. (October 2003)



Lone Pine

(October 2003)



Lone Pine

(October 2003)



Lone Pine

(October 2003)



Lone Pine

(October 2003)



Lone Pine

Lone Pine High has about 130 students. (October 2003)



Lone Pine

(October 2003)



Lone Pine

(December 2008)



Lone Pine

(December 2008)



Lone Pine

There are not many people who live in Inyo but many of them are poor. There are not many jobs. (December 2008)



A large mural on the side of a building depicts a film set scene. The mural shows a vintage car, a crane, and several people in period clothing. A sign on the mural reads "MURRAY DESIGN PRODUCTIONS & ENTERTAINMENT". The scene is set against a backdrop of mountains and a clear blue sky. The mural is painted on a light-colored wall, and the scene is illuminated by bright sunlight.

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Lone Pine

This is the new movie museum that honors the old cowboy movies made here.
(December 2008)

