Sierra County



Sierra County Data

Population: 3,555 (Rank: 56)

Land Area (square miles): 953 Rank: 45)

Highway 49 wiggles its way through the middle of the county. 6,700 foot Yuba Pass separate the two halves to the county. Highway 49 connects with Highway 70 and Beckwourth Pass. Highway 89 connects the county with Lake Tahoe.

Sierra Nevada in Spanish means "snow saw." The county was created in 1852 when gold was discovered. Sierra County sits on the crest of the Sierras. The western half is mountainous and tree covered. The eastern half is the Sierra Valley, the largest alpine valley in North America. The 5,000 high foot valley is a center for cattle raising.

The valley was formed between 2 and 7 million years ago when massive granite blocks began to shift along faults. The valley lowered and the Sierras rose. A lake was later formed when volcanic debris dammed the valley. The Middle Fork of the Feather River eroded an outlet.

The first person to enter the valley was James Beckwourth in 1851. He was looking for a new pass across the Sierras. The valley supplied hay for livestock in Downieville and Sierra City. When gold and silver were found in the Comstock Lode in 1859 the valley produced hay, beef and dairy products for the miners. Swiss-Italian immigrants did much of the farming.

Cities: Loyalton. Towns: Downieville, Sierra City, Sierraville.

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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Photo Trips

July 2002

We travelled through Sierra County on Highway 49. We stopped at Downieville and Sierra City to take pictures. It was Fourth of July.

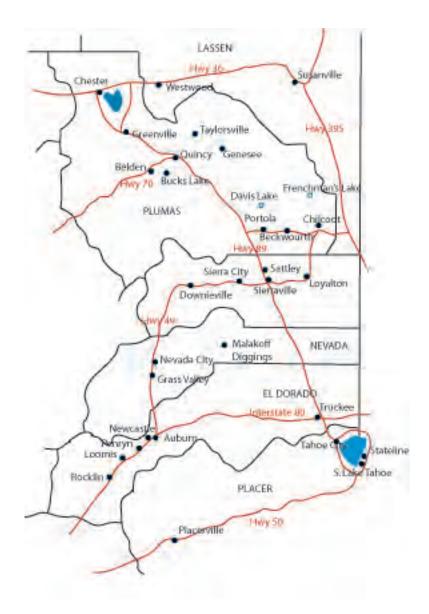
August 2003

This was a quick trip I made to Loyalton after I dropped Nita off at Lake Tahoe.

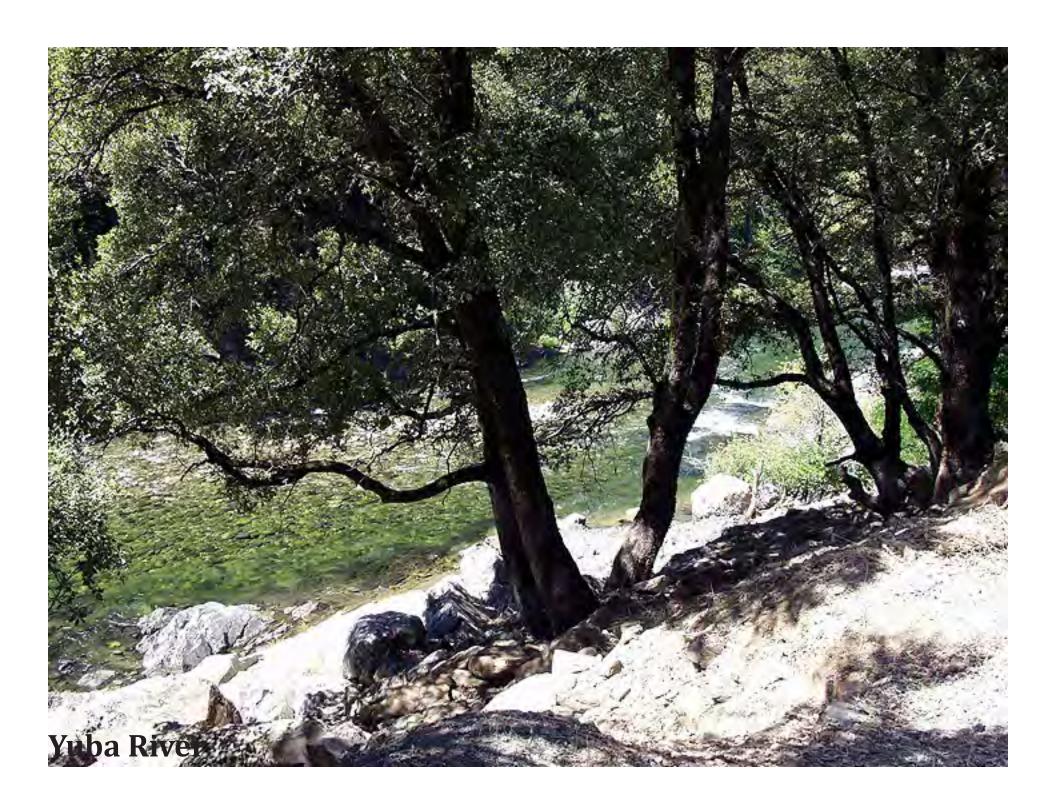
October 2010

We photographed the Sierra Valley portion of Sierra County. This included Sattley, Loyalton and Sierraville.









Downieville is at the intersection of the Yuba and Downie rivers. (July 2002)



The town has only 282 people. There are no street addresses. (July 2002) $\,$



We have visited Downieville only once. It was on the Fourth of July in 2002.







Downieville (July 2002)





This Gold Rush town was founded by Colonel William Downie in 1849. (July 2002)





Sierra City

Highway 49 is the main street of Sierra City. It has a population of 221. (July 2002)





Sierra City











Sierra Valley

Looking down at Sierra Valley from Yuba Pass. This is the largest alpine valley in North America. It developed in the 1860's to provide supplies to the Comstock Lode mines in Nevada. (July 2002)



Sattley was founded in 1860 by Isaac Sattley Church. The original house is still there. (October 2010)



Sierraville

Sierraville is at the intersection of Highway 49 coming from Downieville and Highway 89 coming from Truckee and Lake Tahoe. The only traffic light in the county is here. (October 2010)



Sierraville

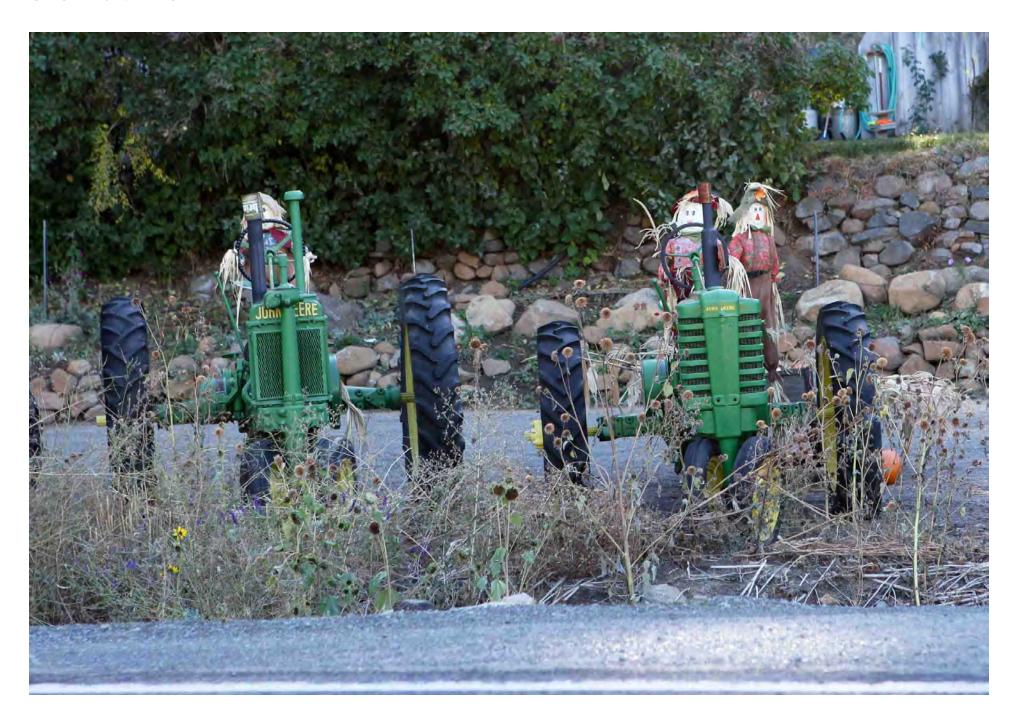
The old hotel has been refurbished and is open for business. The town has a population of 200. (October 2010)



Sierraville (August 2003



Sierraville



Sierra Valley

August 2003



Loyalton

Loyalton is the largest town in the county with a population of 769. The old hotel is closed. We have visited this town twice (2003 and 2010). This is the only incorporated city in the county. Nita and I stayed in this hotel in 1976. The photo is from 2003.



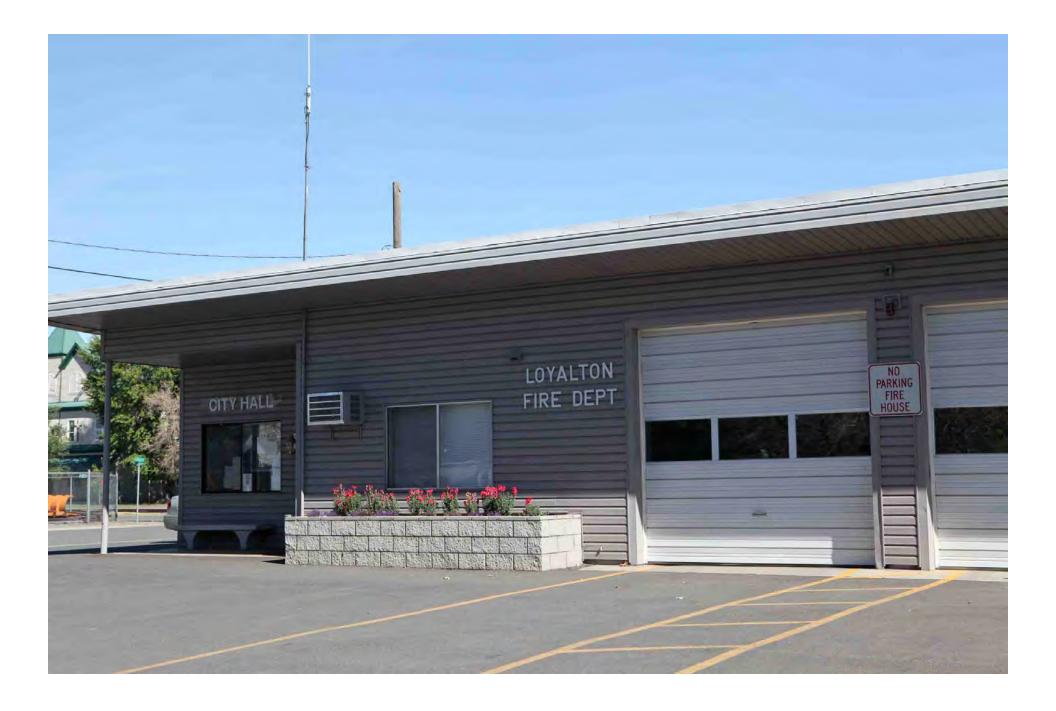
Loyalton August 2003



Loyalton August 2003



Loyalton October 2010



Loyalton October 2010



Loyalton August 2003



Loyalton August 2003

