

Interpretive Guidelines

The intention of the HDC is to establish and maintain the most comprehensive guidelines which ensure accurate representation of this period of California history.

- Recreate and replicate authentic, original social and natural systems
- Connect the relationship between the land and ecosystems to the human and cultural resources which shaped the course of the development of California
- Demonstrate the influence of livestock brought by the Spanish, most notably the horse
- Design historically accurate demonstrations that encourage the visitor's interactive participation
- Re-enact the "stories" of the people and places whose heritage formed the foundation for many of California's institutions and lifestyles.

Museum Content

Wildlife/Ecology



Isolated at the edge of the continent by mountains and deserts, California is in many ways an island, a world unto itself.

California has the lowest point in North America in Death Valley and the highest point in the contiguous United States atop Mt. Whitney.

California has the greatest species richness, the greatest ecological diversity and the highest rate of endemism of any region in the continental United States.

The natural resources of California lands are inextricably interwoven with the social, cultural and economic development.

Native American

The earliest peoples, the true natives of California and for that matter of North and South America - have populated this region for thousands of years. In 1769 California Indians lived peacefully in small tribes throughout the state - on the mountains, valleys, deserts, rivers, forests, and coastal inlets, from the Sonora deserts in Mexico to the verdant forest and rivers of Northern California and Southern Oregon. With arrival of the explorers, missionaries and colonists, the lives of the Native Americans were changed forever. The HDC will offer the opportunity for multiple, diverse Indian tribes to gather and present their history, customs and stories from their own perspective. The Living History Museum with its emphasis on natural history and ecological preservation is ideally suited for Native American exhibitions, many of which are based on the teaching that the land is a living part of creation and that the "human animal" is the steward of that land. There currently is no single place or institution where all the tribes in California can present their history and share traditions with the general public.

