Sierra County, California

Article Talk

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Sierra County (/si¹ ɛrə/ (listen)) is a county located in the U.S. state of California. As of the 2020 census, the population was 3,236,^[3] making it California's second-least populous county.^[2] The county seat is Downieville;^[4] the sole incorporated city is Loyalton. The county is in the Sierra Nevada, northeast of Sacramento on the border with Nevada.

History [edit]

Sierra County was formed from parts of Yuba County in 1852. The county derives its name from the Sierra Nevada.

Prior to the California Gold Rush, the area was home to both the Maidu and the Washoe peoples. They generally summered in the higher elevations to hunt and fish, and returned to lower elevations for the winter months.^[5] After the discovery of gold in the Sierra foothills sparked the California Gold Rush, more than 16,000 miners settled in Sierra County between 1848 and 1860. Most mining settlements in the county sprung up along the North and Middle Forks of the Yuba River, both of which had rich deposits of gold. While some of the mining boom towns faded away once gold fever died down, other settlements such as Downieville and Sierra City have remained.^{[6][7]}

Notable gold nuggets found in the county include a 26.5 pound specimen, avoirdupois, found by a group of sailors at Sailor Ravine, two miles above Downieville. A 51-pound specimen was found in 1853 by a group of Frenchmen in French Ravine. The 106 pound Monumental Nugget was found in Sept. 1869 at Sierra City.^[8]

The Bald Mountain drift mine in Forest City was founded in Aug. 1864, and was the largest of its kind in the state at the time. The Bald Mountain Extension was located in 1874 east of Forest. The Monte Cristo Mine was located in 1854. The largest quartz-mine is the Sierra Buttes Gold Mine was located in 1850 near Sierra City. The Gold Bluff Mine was located near Downieville in 1854. By 1880 the county was "crushing" 70,000 tons of quartz and had 266 miles of mining ditches.^[8]

Geography [edit]

Sierra County, California is a vast and beautiful area that covers 962 square miles according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The county comprises of 953 square miles of land and 9 square miles of water. The county is located in the Sierra Nevada, known for its rugged mountain ranges and picturesque landscapes. The county is known for its natural beauty and rich history, providing a diverse range of landscapes, from rugged mountains to lush forests, tranquil lakes, and streams, and much more. The area is a great place for outdoor enthusiasts, with opportunities for hiking, fishing, hunting, and exploring the natural wonders of the Sierra Nevada.^[9]

Adjacent counties [edit]

- Nevada County, California south
- Yuba County, California west
- Plumas County, California north
- Lassen County, California northeast
- Washoe County, Nevada east

National protected areas [edit]

- Plumas National Forest (part)
- Tahoe National Forest (part)
- Toiyabe National Forest (part)

Politics and government [edit]

Because Loyalton is Sierra County's most populous municipality and its only incorporated city, generally half of the meetings of the county's board of supervisors are held in Downieville and the other half are held in Loyalton.^[10] The county is governed by the five-member Sierra County Board of Supervisors, consisting of the following members as of August 2021.^[11]

- District One (Downieville, Goodyears' Bar, Pike, Alleghany): Lee Adams, Chairman
- District Two (Sierra City, Bassetts, Verdi): Peter W. Huebner
- District Three (Calpine, Sattley, Sierraville): Paul Roen
- District Four (Loyalton): Terry LeBlanc
- District Five (Sierra Brooks): Sharon Dryden

Law enforcement is provided by the Sierra County Sheriff's Department, headed by current Sierra County Sheriff-Coroner Michael "Mike" Fisher. Due to the county's sparse population and geographical obstacles, the Sheriff's Department operates a substation in Loyalton in addition to their main headquarters in Downieville.^[12]

•		.020)
	• Total	3,236
Voter registration statistics [edit]	Density	3.4/sq mi (1.3/km ²)
Population and registered voters [show]	Time zone	UTC-8 (Pacific Standard Time)
	Summer (DST)	UTC-7 (Pacific Daylight Time)
Cities by population and voter registration [edit]	Area code	530
	Website	www.sierracounty.ca.gov 🗗
Cities by population and voter registration		[show]

Sierra County, California County County of Sierra

文A 51 languages ~

Read Edit View history Tools ~

Coordinates: 🥥 39.59°N 120.50°W

Images, from top down, left to right: Downieville, Conifer forest in the Tahoe National Forest, Stampede





Region Incorporated Named for County seat Largest city Government Type Council-Manager Chair Paul Roen Vice Chair Sharon Dryden Board of Supervisors^[1]

Supervisors

Area

 Total 962 sq mi (2,490 km²) Land 953 sq mi (2,470 km²) • Water 9 sq mi (20 km²) Population (April 1, 2020)^[2]

Overview [edit]

Sierra County at one time had favored the Democratic party in presidential elections and was one of few counties in California to be won by George McGovern. In more recent times it is a strongly Republican county in presidential and congressional elections. The last Democrat to win a majority in the county was Jimmy Carter in 1976.

Year 🗢

2020

2016

2012

2008

2004

2000

1996

1992

1988

1984

1980

1976

1972

1968

1964

1960

1956

1952

1948

1944

1940

1936

1932

1928

L924

1920

1916

1912

1908

1904

1900

1896

1892

On November 4, 2008, Sierra County voted 64.2% for Proposition 8,

%

3.85%

11.25%

5.00%

4.52%

2.72%

7.31%

15.06%

28.32%

2.65%

1.95%

•

Third party

No. 🕈

75

209

90

90

53

135

257

531

45

37

[show]

which amended the California Constitution to ban same-sex marriages.^[16]

In the 2009 special statewide election, Sierra County had the highest voter turnout of any county in California, with 53.6% of registered voters participating, according to the Los Angeles Times. The election was nearly double the overall voter turnout in the state, about 23%.^[17]

Transportation [edit]

There is only one traffic signal (a flashing red light at the intersection of highways 49 and 89) in Sierra County. In the winter of 2007 it was removed after an automobile accident and was replaced in the fall of 2008. [citation needed]

Major highways [edit]

- 395 U.S. Route 395
- 🐻 Interstate 80
- 👩 State Route 49
- 👩 State Route 89

County roads [edit]

- Main County Route A23
- M24 County Route A24
- Henness Pass Road
- Stampede Dam Road
- Gold Lake Road/Highway

Public transportation [edit]

Public transportation in Sierra County is limited to vans run by senior citizen agencies in Downieville and Loyalton which the general public may ride on a space-available basis.^[18]

Airport [edit]

Sierraville-Dearwater Field Airport is a general aviation airport located near Sierraville.

Crime [edit]

The following table includes the number of incidents reported and the rate per 1,000 persons for each type of offense.

Population and crime rates [show]

Demographics [edit]

2020 census [edit]

Sierra County, California - Demographic Profile				
(NH = Non-Hispanic)				
Race / Ethnicity	Pop 2010 ^[24]	Pop 2020 ^[25]	% 2010	% 2020
White alone (NH)	2,855	2,615	88.12%	80.81%
Black or African American alone (NH)	5	7	0.15%	0.22%
Native American or Alaska Native alone (NH)	41	18	1.27%	0.56%
Asian alone (NH)	12	7	0.37%	0.22%
Pacific Islander alone (NH)	2	1	0.06%	0.03%
Some Other Race alone (NH)	1	25	0.03%	0.77%
Mixed Race/Multi-Racial (NH)	55	186	1.70%	5.75%
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	269	377	8.30%	11.65%
Total	3,240	3,236	100.00%	100.00%

Note: the US Census treats Hispanic/Latino as an ethnic category. This table excludes Latinos from the racial assigns them to a separate category. Hispanics/Latinos can be of any race.

2015 [edit]

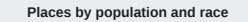
As of 2015 the largest self-reported ancestry groups in Sierra County, California are:^[26]

Largest ancestries (2015) [hide] \$	Percent 🗢
English 🕂	19.0%
German	18.2%
"American"	16.1%
Scottish 🔀	6.4%
Italian	5.9%
Polish	4.6%
Portuguese 🧕	4.0%
Swiss 🛨	3.6%
Swedish	3.2%
French	3.1%

2011 [edit]

Population, race, and income [show]

Places by population, race, and income [edit]



United States presidential election results for Sierra County, California^{[15][note 2]} [hide]

No.

730

601

653

743

646

540

573

653

791

781

Democratic

\$

%

37.49%

32.35%

36.30%

37.32%

33.16%

29.24%

33.57%

34.83%

46.64%

41.19%

•

Republican

\$

%

58.65%

56.40%

58.70%

58.16%

64.12%

63.45%

51.38%

36.85%

50.71%

56.86%

49.77%

43.15%

47.51%

45.93%

33.28%

46.79%

50.55%

53.76%

43.40%

39.91%

32.38%

22.56%

25.46%

51.52%

38.93%

72.18%

35.36%

0.86%

55.40%

65.05%

60.99%

56.61%

57.45%

\$

No.

1,142

1,048

1,056

1,158

1,249

1,172

877

691

860

1,078

855

680

629

548

413

576

638

822

546

443

511

340

292

457

276

506

360

10

600

791

702

707

787

651	37.89%	ó	2	12	12.34	%
841	53.36%	ó	5	5	3.49%	6
658	49.70%	ó	3	87	2.79%	6
559	46.86%	́р	8	86	7.21%	6
828	66.72%	b b	(0	0.00%	6
647	52.56%	́р	1	8	0.65%	6
620	49.13%	, D		4	0.32%	6
698	45.65%	, D	9	9	0.59%	6
660	52.46%	Ď	5	52	4.13%	6
662	59.64%	ó	ļ	5	0.45%	6
1,057	66.98%	ó	1	.0	0.63%	6
1,152	76.44%	Ď	1	.5	1.00%	6
796	69.40%	ó	5	9	5.14%	6
420	47.35%	, D	10		1.13%	
73	10.30%	, D	3	60	50.78%	
158	22.54%	, D	37		5.28%	
594	58.35%		64		6.29%	
515	44.47%	ó	633		54.66%	
410	37.86%		73		6.74%	
376	30.92%		49		4.03%	
436	37.88%		13		1.13%	6
527	42.19%	, D	1	.5	1.20%	6
529	38.61%	, D	5	54	3.94%	6
		Hi	stori	cal p	opulatio	on
			ารนร		-	
			360	11,38		_
			370		L9 –50.	79
		18	380	6,62	23 17.9	9%
		18	390	5,05	51 -23.	79
			900		L7 –20.	
				4,09		
			920		33 -56.	
)30)40		22 35.8 25 24.9	
			950		LO -20.	
			960		47 –6.8	
			970		65 5.3	
		19	980	3,07	73 29.9	9%
		19	990	3,31	L8 8.0	0%
categories	and		000	3,55		
			010	3,24		
		20)20	3,23	36 -0.2	

U.S. Decennial Census^[20] 1790-1960^[21] 1900-1990^[22] 1990-2000^[23] 2010^[24] 2020^[25]

2010 [edit]

The 2010 United States Census reported that Sierra County had a population of 3,240. The racial makeup of Sierra County was 3,022 (93.3%) White, 6 (0.2%) African American, 44 (1.4%) Native American, 12 (0.4%) Asian, 2 (0.1%) Pacific Islander, 75 (2.3%) from other races, and 79 (2.4%) from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 269 persons (8.3%).^[34]

Population reported at 2010 United States Census [show]

2000 [edit]

As of the census^[35] of 2000, there were 3,555 people, 1,520 households and 986 families residing in the county. The population density was 4 people per square mile (1/km²). There were 2,202 housing units at an average density of 2 per square mile (1/km²). The racial makeup of the county was 94.2% White, 0.2% Black or African American, 1.9% Native American, 0.2% Asian, 0.1% Pacific Islander, 1.0% from other races, and 2.5% from two or more races. Six percent of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race.

Eighteen percent were of English ancestry, 16% were of Irish, 11% German and 8% Italian ancestry.^[36] Over ninety-five (95.3) percent spoke English and 3.4% Spanish as their first language.

There were 1,520 households, out of which 27.6% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 53.1% were married couples living together, 7.9% had a female householder with no husband present, and 35.1% were non-families. 29.0% of all households were made up of individuals, and 11.5% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.32 and the average family size was 2.83.

In the county, the population was spread out, with 23.3% under the age of 18, 4.8% from 18 to 24, 24.0% from 25 to 44, 30.2% from 45 to 64, and 17.7% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 44 years. For every 100 females there were 102.0 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 97.9 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$35,827, and the median income for a family was \$42,756. Males had a median income of \$36,121 versus \$30,000 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$18,815. About 9.0% of families and 11.3% of the population were below the poverty line, including 14.3% of those under age 18 and 2.2% of those age 65 or over.

Media [edit]

Sierra County is served by two long-running local newspapers. The Sierra Valley region, which is partially within Sierra County, is served by the Sierra Booster, based in Loyalton. This paper has been published bi-weekly since 1949 when it was established by reporter, miner, and airman Hal Wright and his wife Allene.^[37] It is today run by their daughter Janice Wright Buck.

The other paper serving the county is The Mountain Messenger 2 which is based in Downieville. The Messenger has been in constant publication since 1853 and is currently the longest-running weekly newspaper in the state of California. Its more notable former contributor was Mark Twain, at the time in hiding from Nevadan authorities and writing under his birth name of Samuel Clemens.^[38]

This paper was the center of considerable media attention in early 2020 when its future was uncertain with the retirement of Don Russell, who had owned and operated it for 30 years; it was saved by local retiree Carl Butz, who purchased the paper and runs it today.^{[39][40]} The Mountain Messenger is printed every Thursday by Feather Publishing Co., based in Quincy; it is distributed across Sierra, eastern Plumas and western Nevada counties.

Education [edit]

Sierra-Plumas Joint Unified School District

Communities [edit]

City [edit]

Loyalton

Census-designated places [edit]

• Alleghany	Sattley
Calpine	Sierra Brooks
Downieville (county seat)	Sierra City
Goodyears Bar	Sierraville
• Pike	Verdi

Unincorporated communities [edit]

- Forest
- Gibsonville
- Bassetts

Ghost towns [edit]

Eureka City	Poker Flat
Howland Flat	Potosi
Pine Grove	Shady Flat

Population ranking [edit]

The population ranking of the following table is based on the 2010 census of Sierra County.^[41] *†* county seat

Rank 🕈	City/Town/etc. 🗢	Municipal type 🗢	Population (2010 Census) +
1	Loyalton	City	769
2	Sierra Brooks	CDP	478
3	† Downieville	CDP	282
4	Sierra City	CDP	221
5	Calpine	CDP	205
6	Sierraville	CDP	200
7	Verdi	CDP	162
8	Pike	CDP	134
9	Goodyears Bar	CDP	68
10	Alleghany	CDP	58
11	Sattley	CDP	49

See also [edit]

[show]

- Hiking trails in Sierra County
- National Register of Historic Places listings in Sierra County, California
- Schroeder Mountain

Notes [edit]

- 1. ^ a b Percentage of registered voters with respect to total population. Percentages of party members with respect to registered voters follow.
- 2. ^ The leading "other" candidate, national Progressive and statewide Republican nominee Theodore Roosevelt, received 483 votes, whilst Socialist Party candidate
- Eugene V. Debs received 133 votes, Prohibition Party candidate Eugene W. Chafin received 13 votes, and various write-in candidates received 14 votes.
- 3. ^ Only larceny-theft cases involving property over \$400 in value are reported as property crimes.
- 4. ^ Other = Some other race + Two or more races
- 5. ^ Native American = Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander + American Indian or Alaska Native

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External links [edit]

- Official website 🖉
- Sierra County Chamber of Commerce ∠
- Sierra County Visitor Guide ∠
- Sierra County Office of Education ∠
- Discover Sierra County ∠
- Places adjacent to Sierra County, California [show] [show] V.T.E Municipalities and communities of Sierra County, California, United States V•T•E **State of California** [show] Authority control [show] Categories: Sierra County, California 1852 establishments in California California counties Populated places established in 1852

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