

**Tulare County** (/tʊˈlɑːri/ *tū-LAIR-ee*) is a county in the U.S. state of California. As of the 2010 census, the population was 442,179.<sup>[a]</sup> Its county seat is Visalia.<sup>[a]</sup> The county is named for Tulare Lake, once the largest freshwater lake west of the Great Lakes. Drained for agricultural development, the site is now in Kings County, which was created in 1893 from the western portion of the formerly larger Tulare County.

Tulare County comprises the Visalia-Porterville, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area. The county is located south of Fresno, spanning from the San Joaquin Valley east to the Sierra Nevada.

Sequoia National Park is located in the county, as are part of Kings Canyon National Park, in its northeast corner (shared with Fresno County), and part of Mount Whitney, on its eastern border (shared with Inyo County). As of the 2010 census, the population was 442,179, up from 368,021 at the 2000 census.

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## History

The land was occupied for thousands of years by the Yokuts. Beginning in the eighteenth century, Spain established missions to colonize California and convert the American Indians. Chiefly, Comandante Pedro Fages, while hunting for deermeats in the Central Valley in 1772, discovered a great lake surrounded by marshes and filled with rushes; he named it Los Tules (the tules). It is from this lake that the county derives its name. The root of the name *Tulare* is found in the Nahuatl word *tulin*, designating cattail or similar reeds.

In 1805, 1806 and again in 1816, the Spanish out of Mission San Luis Obispo explored Lake Tulare.<sup>[7]</sup> Bubal was a native village located on the Western side of Lake Tulare. In 1816, Fr. Luis Martinez of Mission San Luis Obispo arrived at Bubal with soldiers and armed Christian Northern Chinaman pressuring the people to send their children for baptism at his mission on the coast. Conflict broke out, and Martinez's party burned Bubal to the ground, destroying the cache of food harvested for the winter.<sup>[8]</sup>

Although Bubal's relationship with the Christian Salinians under Fr. Calbot at Mission San Miguel was better, between 1816 and 1834, Bubal was a center of native resistance. The marshes around Lake Tulare were impetrable by Spanish horses, which gave the Yokuts a military advantage. At one point, the Spanish considered building a presidio with 100 soldiers at Bubal to control the resistance, but that never came to pass. The Spanish cilled the natives of the area Tulareños, and before 1816 and after 1834, they were incorporated into Mission San Miguel and Mission San Luis Obispo.<sup>[8]</sup>

After Mexico achieved independence, it continued to rule California. After the *Mexican Cession* and the *Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo* in 1848, the area became part of the United States. Tulare County was soon formed from parts of Mariposa County only 4 years later in 1852. There were two early attempts to split off a new Buena Vista County in 1855, and Coso County in 1864, but both failed. Parts of the county's territory were given to Fresno County in 1856, to Kern County and to Inyo County in 1866 and to Kings County in 1893.

The infectious disease *Tularemia* caused by the bacterium *Francisella tularensis* is named after Tulare County.

In 1908 Colonel Allen Allenworth and associates founded Allenworth as a black farming community. They intended to develop a place where African Americans could three free of white discrimination. It was the only community in California founded, financed and governed by African Americans. While its first years were highly successful, the community encountered environmental problems from dropping water tables which eventually caused it to fail. Today the historic area is preserved as the *Colonel Allenworth State Historic Park*, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Geography

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 4,839 square miles (12,530 km<sup>2</sup>), of which 4,824 square miles (12,490 km<sup>2</sup>) is land and 14 square miles (36 km<sup>2</sup>) (0.3%) is water.<sup>[a]</sup>

## Adjacent counties

- Fresno County—north
- Inyo County—west
- Kern County—south
- Kings County—west

## Lakes

- Arctic Lake
- Bullfrog Lakes
- Columbine Lake
- Crescent Lake
- Eagle Lake
- Franklin Lakes
- Lake Kaweah
- Lake Success

## Rivers

- Angora River
- Alpine River
- Kaweah River
- Needlerock River
- Monarch River
- Negro River
- St. John's River
- Tule River

## Parks

- Colonel Allenworth State Historic Park
- Alpaugh Park
- Balch Park
- Bartlett Park
- Cutler Park
- Dry Creek Preserve
- Horse Creek Recreation Area
- Kaweah Oaks Preserve
- Kings River Nature Preserve
- Lackey's Cabin
- Lake Kaweah Recreation Area
- Mineral King Game Refuge

## National protected areas

- Blue Ridge National Wildlife Refuge
- Giant Sequoia National Monument (part)
- Inyo National Forest (part)
- Kings Canyon National Park (part)
- Pixley National Wildlife Refuge
- Sequoia National Forest (part)
- Sequoia National Park

## Sequoia National Park

Sequoia National Park is a national park in the southern Sierra Nevada, east of Visalia. It was established in 1890 as the second U.S. national park, after Yellowstone. The park spans 404,051 acres (1,635.14 km<sup>2</sup>). Encompassing a vertical relief of nearly 13,000 feet (3,962 m), the park contains among its natural resources the highest point in the contiguous 48 United States, *Mount Whitney*, at 14,505 feet (4,421 m) above sea level. The park is south of and contiguous with Kings Canyon National Park; the two are administered by the National Park Service as one unit, called *Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks*.

## Flora

Tulare County is rich in native plant species due in part to a diversity in habitats, including creeks, rivers, hills, and mountains. Native plants include incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), manzanita (*Arctostaphylos manzanita*), *Salvia spathacea*, mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*), milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*), *Epilobium cilestrogamum*, monkeyflower (*Minulus*), *Penstemon*, California melic (*Melica californica*), and deer grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*).<sup>[10]</sup>

## Government and policing

## Administration

Tulare County is a general law county under the California Constitution. That is, it does not have a county charter. The county is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors. Supervisors are elected by districts for four-year terms. There are no term limits in effect. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are elected annually by the Board of Supervisors from among its members.

## Sheriff

The Tulare County Sheriff provides court protection, county jail operation, patrol and detective functions in the unincorporated areas of the county. Incorporated towns have municipal police departments or contract with the Sheriff for their police operations.

## Transportation

## Major highways

- State Route 43
- State Route 63
- State Route 65
- State Route 99
- State Route 137
- State Route 180
- State Route 190
- State Route 198
- State Route 201
- State Route 216
- State Route 245

## Public transportation

Tulare County Transit provides a countywide bus service linking the population centers. A connection to Delano in Kern County is also operated.

The cities of Tulare, Porterville, and Visalia have their own local bus services.

*Greyhound* and *Orange Bell Stages* provide long-distance, intercity bus service.

## Airports

The *Porterville Municipal Airport* located 3 nautical miles from Downtown Porterville was formerly limited commercial passenger service with WestAir. The airport offers general aviation to the public, it is also home to Porterville Air Attack Base on the south part of the airport. The *Visalia Municipal Airport* is a city-owned airport for the city of Visalia, California. Moffett Field is a city-owned general aviation airport located in Tulare.

The nearest full operation commercial airports are Bakersfield's *Meadows Field Airport* to the South, and Fresno's *Fresno Yosemite International Airport* to the North.

## Crime

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

## Cities by population and crime rates

Cities by population and crime rates	<span>[</span> show <span>]</span>

## Demographics

## 2011

## Population, race, and income

## Places by population, race, and income

Places by population and race	<span>[</span> show <span>]</span>

Places by population and income	<span>[</span> show <span>]</span>

## 2010

The 2010 United States Census reported that Tulare County had a population of 442,179. The racial makeup of Tulare County was 265,618 (60.1%) White, 7,196 (1.6%) African American, 6,993 (1.6%) Native American, 15,176 (3.4%) Asian, 509 (0.1%) Pacific Islander, 128,263 (29.0%) from other races, and 18,424 (4.2%) from two or more races. There were 268,065 people (60.6%) of Hispanic or Latino origin, of any race.<sup>[21]</sup>

## Population reported at 2010 United States Census

As of the census<sup>[28]</sup> of 2000, there were 368,021 people, 110,385 households, and 87,093 families residing in the county. The population density was 76 people per square mile (29/km<sup>2</sup>). There were 119,639 housing units at an average density of 25 per square mile (10/km<sup>2</sup>). The racial makeup of the county was 58.1% White, 1.6% Black or African American, 1.6% Native American, 3.3% Asian, 0.1% Pacific Islander, 30.8% from other races, and 4.6% from two or more races. 50.8% of the population were Hispanic or Latino of any race. 6.2% were of American, 5.7% German and 5.0% English ancestry according to *Census* 2000. 56.3% spoke English, 38.9% Spanish and 1.1% Portuguese as their first language.

There were 110,385 households, out of which 44.9% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 58.1% were married couples living together, 14.5% had a female householder with no husband present, and 21.1% were non-families. 17.1% of all households were made up of individuals, and 7.7% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 3.28 and the average family size was 3.67.

In the county, the population was spread out, with 33.8% under the age of 18, 10.6% from 18 to 24, 27.6% from 25 to 44, 18.2% from 45 to 64, and 9.8% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 29 years. For every 100 females there were 100.0 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 97.7 males.

The median income for a household in the county was \$33,983, and the median income for a family was \$36,297. Males had a median income of \$30,892 versus \$24,569 for females. The per capita income for the county was \$14,006. About 18.8% of families and 23.9% of the population were below the poverty line, including 32.6% of those under 18 and 10.5% of those age 65 or over.

## Crime statistics

(reported by the sheriff's office or county police)<sup>[27]</sup>

- Murders: 30
- Rapes: 40
- Robberies: 87
- Assaults: 411
- Burglaries: 1328
- Thefts: 2117
- Auto thefts: 11

## Metropolitan Statistical Area

The United States *Office of Management and Budget* has designated Tulare County as the Visalia-Porterville, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area,<sup>[29]</sup> The United States Census Bureau ranked the Visalia-Porterville, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area as the 111th most populous metropolitan statistical area of the United States as of July 1, 2012.<sup>[29]</sup>

The Office of Management and Budget has further designated the Visalia-Porterville, CA Metropolitan Statistical Area as a component of the more extensive Visalia-Porterville-Hanford, CA Combined Statistical Area,<sup>[29]</sup> the 80th most populous combined statistical area and the 92nd most populous primary statistical area of the United States as of July 1, 2012.<sup>[29][30]</sup>

## Politics

## Voter registration statistics

## Population and registered voters

Cities by population and voter registration	<span>[</span> show <span>]</span>

## Overview

Tulare is a strongly Republican county in Presidential and congressional elections. The last Democratic candidate for president to win a majority in the county was Lyndon Johnson in 1964. In the 2016 presidential election, Republican candidate and overall winner, Donald Trump, won Tulare by a 9.29% margin of victory, the closest margin of victory for a Republican in the county since Richard Nixon's 8.37% margin in 1960. The Republican advantage narrowed further in the 2020 presidential election when Donald Trump won the county by a 7.82% margin despite losing nationally to Joe Biden.

## Presidential elections results

In the United States House of Representatives, Tulare County is split between 3 congressional districts:<sup>[33]</sup>

- California's 21st congressional district, represented by Republican David Valadao
- California's 22nd congressional district, represented by Republican Devin Nunes and
- California's 23rd congressional district, represented by Republican Kevin McCarthy.<sup>[34]</sup>

In the California State Senate, it is split between 3 legislative districts:<sup>[35]</sup>

- the 8th Senate District, represented by Republican Andreas Borgeas,
- the 14th Senate District, represented by Democrat Melissa Hurtado, and
- the 16th Senate District, represented by Republican Shanon Groves.

In the California State Assembly, the county is split between the 23rd Assembly District, represented by Republican Jim Patterson, and the 26th Assembly District, represented by Republican Devin Mathis.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Economy

The dairy industry, with sales of milk products, brings in the most revenue for the county, typically more than US\$ 1 billion a year annually. Oranges, grapes, and cattle-related commodities also earn hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

In 2001, Tulare became the most productive county in the U.S. in terms of agricultural revenues, at US\$3.5 billion annually. It surpassed Fresno County's US\$3.2 billion, which had held the top spot for over two decades. Due to the importance of agriculture in the county as well as its location in the state, since 1963 the city of Tulare has been the site of the annual *World Ag Expo*,<sup>[37]</sup> the world's largest agricultural exposition.

Minor league sports teams, such as the baseball *Visalia Rawhide* of the class-A level *California League* (an affiliate in the Arizona Diamondbacks), two teams of the *Minor League Football Association* in Tulare and Visalia, and four teams of the *Central California Basketball League* based in Porterville, attract many residents and add to the county's *[*citation needed].

## Top employers

According to the county's 2010 *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*,<sup>[38]</sup> the top employers in the county are:

	Employer	# of Employees
1	County of Tulare	4,320
2	Porterville Developmental Center	3,000
3	Kaweah Delta Medical Center	2,000
4	Ruiz Foods	1,800
5	Wal-Mart	1,692
6	College of the Sequoias	1,160
7	Cigna	900
8	Jostens	720
9	Land O'Lakes	600
10	Monrovia Nursery	600

## Utilities and infrastructure

Electricity service in Tulare County is served by Southern California Edison. TV and internet is served by Charter Spectrum.

## Communities

## Cities

- Dinuba
- Exeter
- Farmersville
- Lindsay
- Porterville
- Tulare
- Visalia (county seat)
- Woodlake

## Census designated places

- Allensworth
- Alpaugh
- California Hot Springs
- Camp Nelson
- Cedar Slope
- Cutler
- Delt Colony
- Ducor
- Earlmarst
- East Orosi
- East Porterville
- East Tulare Villa
- El Rancho
- Goshen
- Hardland
- Idlewild
- Ivanhoe
- Kennedy Meadows
- Lemon Cove
- Linnell Camp
- London
- Matheny
- McClemey Tract
- Monson
- Orosi
- Panorama Heights
- Patterson Tract
- Pierpoint
- Pine Flat
- Pixley
- Plainview
- Ponderosa
- Posy
- Poso Park
- Richgrove
- Rodriguez Camp
- Sequoia Crest
- Seville
- Silver City
- Springville
- Strathmore
- Sugarloaf Mountain Park
- Sugarloaf Saw Mill
- Sugarloaf Village
- Terra Bella
- Terraflora
- Tevison
- Three Rivers
- Tipton
- Tonyville
- Topolville
- Traver
- Waukena
- West Goshen
- Wilsonia
- Woodville
- Yettem

## Other unincorporated communities

- Advance
- Angolia
- Badger
- Balance Rock
- Cairns Corner
- Calgro
- Johnsondale
- Kaweah
- Rocky Hill
- Ultra
- White River
- Yokohi Valley
- Zante

## Indian reservation

- Tule River Indian Reservation

## Population ranking

The population ranking of the following table is based on the 2010 census of Tulare County.<sup>[39]</sup>

† county seat

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