

Native Peoples of the East Bay

PAST TO PRESENT

East Bay 
Regional Park District
Healthy Parks Healthy People

This brochure will take you on a journey through the history of the first peoples of the places now known as Alameda and Contra Costa counties.



First basket by Ohlone basket weaver Linda Yamane in which she lovingly keeps a photo of her grandmother Beatrice Barcelona.



Ohlone, Bay Miwok, and Delta Yokuts peoples knew and understood the natural world with an intimacy unfathomable to society today. Their sacred narratives describe how the world and people were created at the dawn of time.

Local Native peoples thrived here for countless generations because they knew how to balance human needs with that of the land and all its other inhabitants. They used specialized land management techniques, like landscape burning, to increase habitat diversity. Such methods increased the numbers of, and improved the health of, the plants and wildlife on which people relied. Their social, political, economic, religious, and material heritage is profound.

All maps in this brochure approximate the landscape as it existed in the late 1700s and 1800s except the one on the back cover.

Clamshell disk bead and abalone shell pendant necklace made by Linda Yamane (Rumsien Ohlone), draped around an abalone shell.





Soaproot brush made by Ramona Garibay (Jalquin/Saclan Ohlone/Bay Miwok).



Ramona Garibay cracking dried black oak acorns for acorn soup.



Jalquin/Saclan elder Ruth Orta sharing a photo and stories of her mother with her daughter Ramona Garibay, granddaughter Rita Rodriguez, and great-granddaughter Athina Rodriguez.

Today's Ohlone, Bay Miwok, and Delta Yokuts Peoples

Today's Ohlone, Bay Miwok, and Delta Yokuts peoples maintain distinct cultural communities. They find pride in preserving ancestral knowledge, beliefs, values, arts, skills, languages, foods, and spiritual traditions. They're bringing these forward into the future in both new and old ways. Today's Native communities are diverse, as were those of their ancestors. They honor their ancestors and enduring connections to traditional homelands by advocating for environmental protection, restoring Native land management practices, and working to preserve and protect ancient sacred, village, burial, and other sites. Three Ohlone/Costanoan tribes have submitted petitions for federal recognition.

To Find Out More

If you'd like to find out more about the history and cultures past to present of the first peoples of this land, these two online books are a good place to start.

Milliken, Randall, Lawrence E. Shoup, and Beverly R. Ortiz
2005 *Ohlone/Costanoan Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula and Their Neighbors, Yesterday and Today*. San Francisco: Golden Gate National Recreation Area. To download a copy go to nps.gov/goga.

Ortiz, Beverly R.
2015 *Ohlone Curriculum with Bay Miwok Resources and Introduction to the Delta Yokuts*. Oakland: East Bay Regional Park District. To download a copy go to ebparks.org.





By Land and by Sea 1542-1776

The first non-Indians to intrude on the lives of local Native peoples did so by sea in 1542, anchoring in the place now known as Monterey Bay near Atchista, a Rumsien Ohlone village. Several more expeditions followed by sea and by land. By land, the newcomers traveled well-worn trails made by generations of Native footsteps. Native peoples reacted to the newcomers they encountered in different ways—some with fear; others with curiosity, extending their hospitality and giving gifts. Still others treated the arrival of these strangers as a diplomatic event. These early encounters portended a time of tremendous disruption, dislocation, and upheaval in the lives of the first peoples of this land.

“All along the plains we saw occasional Indians, some of whom fled on seeing us, and others who waited for us.”

— Pedro Font, 1776



Sea Expeditions

- 1542-1543 Cabrillo/Ferrello
- 1564-1815 Manila Galleons
- 1579 Drake
- 1595 Cermeño
- 1775 Ayala/Cañizares

Land Expeditions

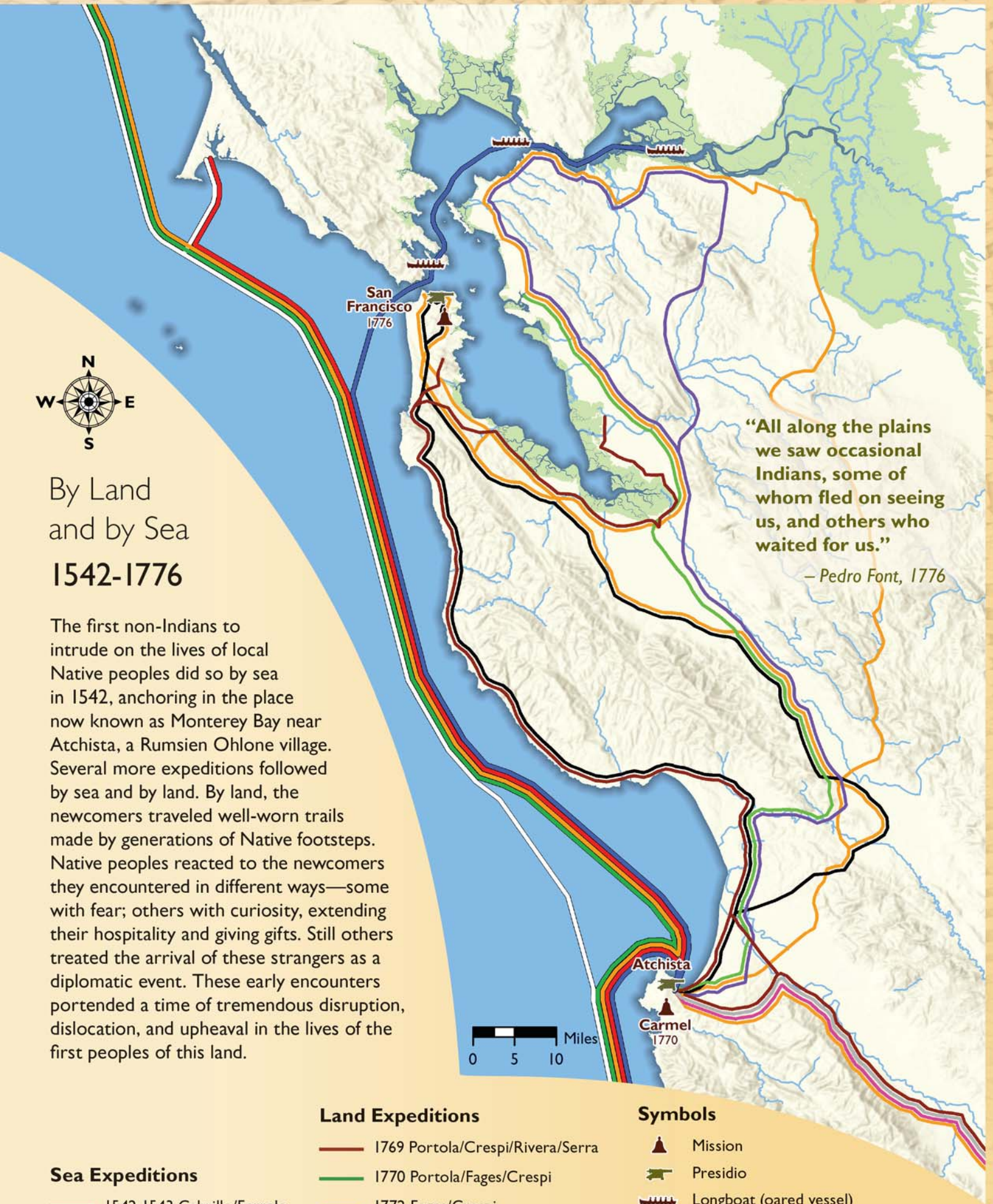
- 1769 Portola/Crespi/Rivera/Serra
- 1770 Portola/Fages/Crespi
- 1772 Fages/Crespi
- 1774 Rivera
- 1774 Rivera/Paloü
- 1774 Anza/Garcés/Tarabal
- 1776 Anza/Font

Symbols

- Mission
- Presidio
- Longboat (oared vessel)

Pre-1850s Shoreline

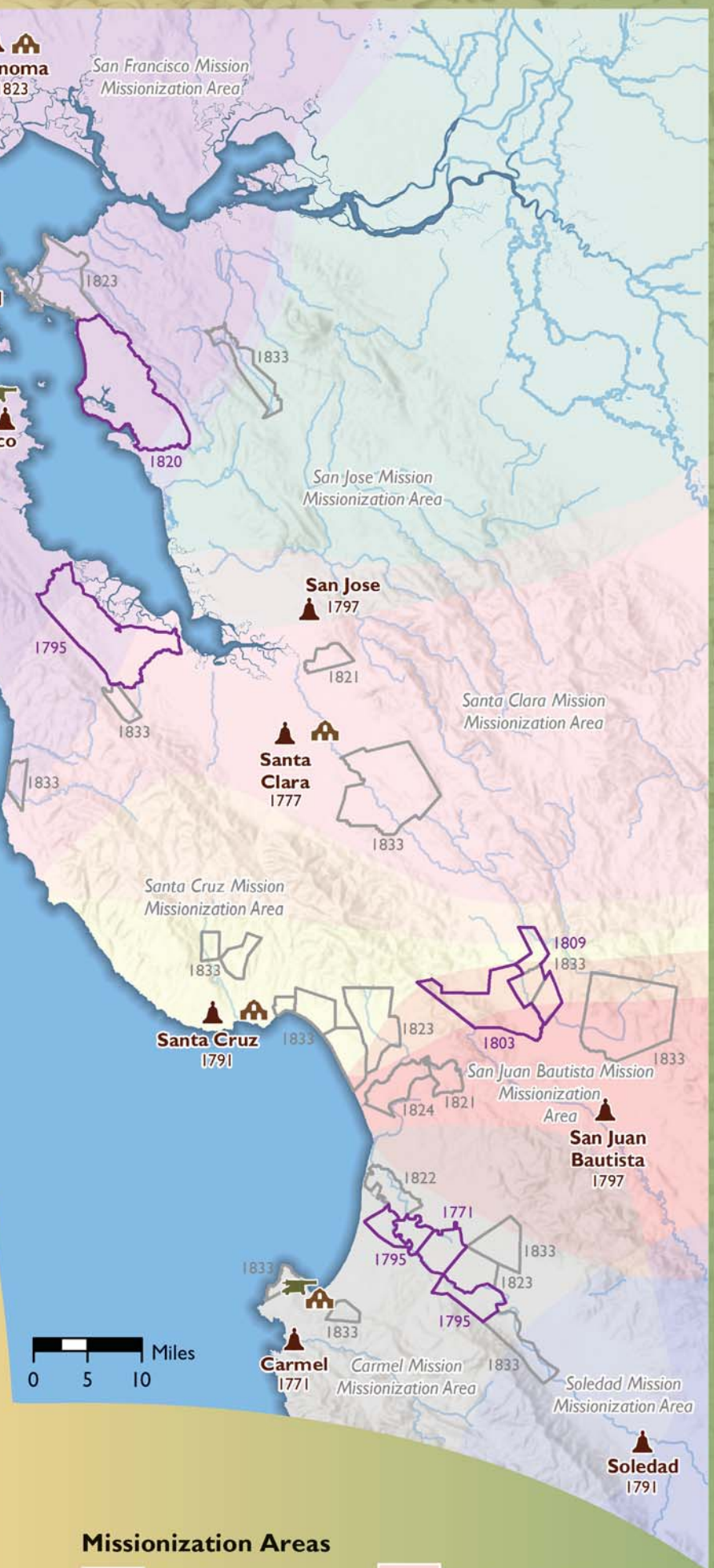
- Historic marshes and/or mudflats
- Water
- Land and rivers














Spanish Missionization 1770-1833

The permanent settlement of Spanish missionaries, soldiers, and later civilians initiated a time of incalculable suffering and change for local Native peoples. The Spanish established missions, presidios (forts), pueblos (towns), and land-grant ranchos (ranches) with titles held by the monarchy of Spain, all built and run with Indian labor. Many Natives resisted missionization. That resistance crumbled in the face of forces beyond their control. Countless elders, children, and infants died from previously unfamiliar European diseases. Mission runaways were forced to return and corporal punishment was used to keep people in line. Extensive environmental changes resulted from the introduction of cattle, horses, and invasive plants, and the outlawing of Native landscape burning practices, making it impossible to continue living the older way.



- Ranchos**
-  1795-1820 Spanish Period Ranchos
 -  1821-1833 Early Mexican Period Ranchos

- Symbols**
-  Mission
 -  Presidio
 -  Pueblo

- Missionization Areas**
-  San Francisco Mission
 -  San Jose Mission
 -  Santa Clara Mission
 -  Santa Cruz Mission
 -  San Juan Bautista Mission
 -  Carmel Mission
 -  Soledad Mission
 -  Not Mapped

Sonoma Mission and San Rafael Mission "Missionization Areas" not mapped.



Secularization and Mexican Ranchos 1834-1846

After Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821, a process began to secularize (privatize) mission lands. The number of ranchos greatly increased. Most of them covered thousands of acres, their titles now held by individuals. Although Spanish missionaries had promised to one day return mission lands to local Native peoples, only a tiny number of Ohlone and no Bay Miwok or Delta Yokuts ever received any land. Instead, they became serf-like laborers on non-Indian owned ranchos. The older boys and men worked as vaqueros (horsemen and cattle herders). The older girls and women worked as housekeepers, cooks, and childcare workers. Rancho owners used corporal punishment to keep their Native workforce under control. With virtually no exception, all were unpaid.



Ranchos

- 1795-1846 Ranchos
- Mission, Pueblo, or Government Lands

Symbols

- Mission
- Presidio
- Pueblo

Pre-1850s Shoreline

- Historic marshes and/or mudflats
- Water
- Land and rivers





Alameda and Contra Costa Counties 1865

Beginning in 1850, when California became a state, Ohlone, Bay Miwok, and Delta Yokuts peoples became subject to state laws that legalized the indenture and de facto slavery of Indian people, leading to their kidnapping, buying, and selling. These laws also made it illegal for Natives to testify in court, serve on juries, and vote. Although partially repealed after passage of the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, full repeal would not come until the 1870s. Citizenship was achieved for most California Indians in 1917, but not for all until 1924.

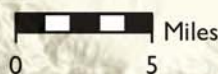
This map depicts, as closely as possible, early towns and commercial areas in the 1865 East Bay. Soon thereafter, railroads expanded dramatically throughout the region. The East Bay steadily urbanized, bringing yet more changes to the lives of local Native peoples and the homelands they still cherish.

Symbols

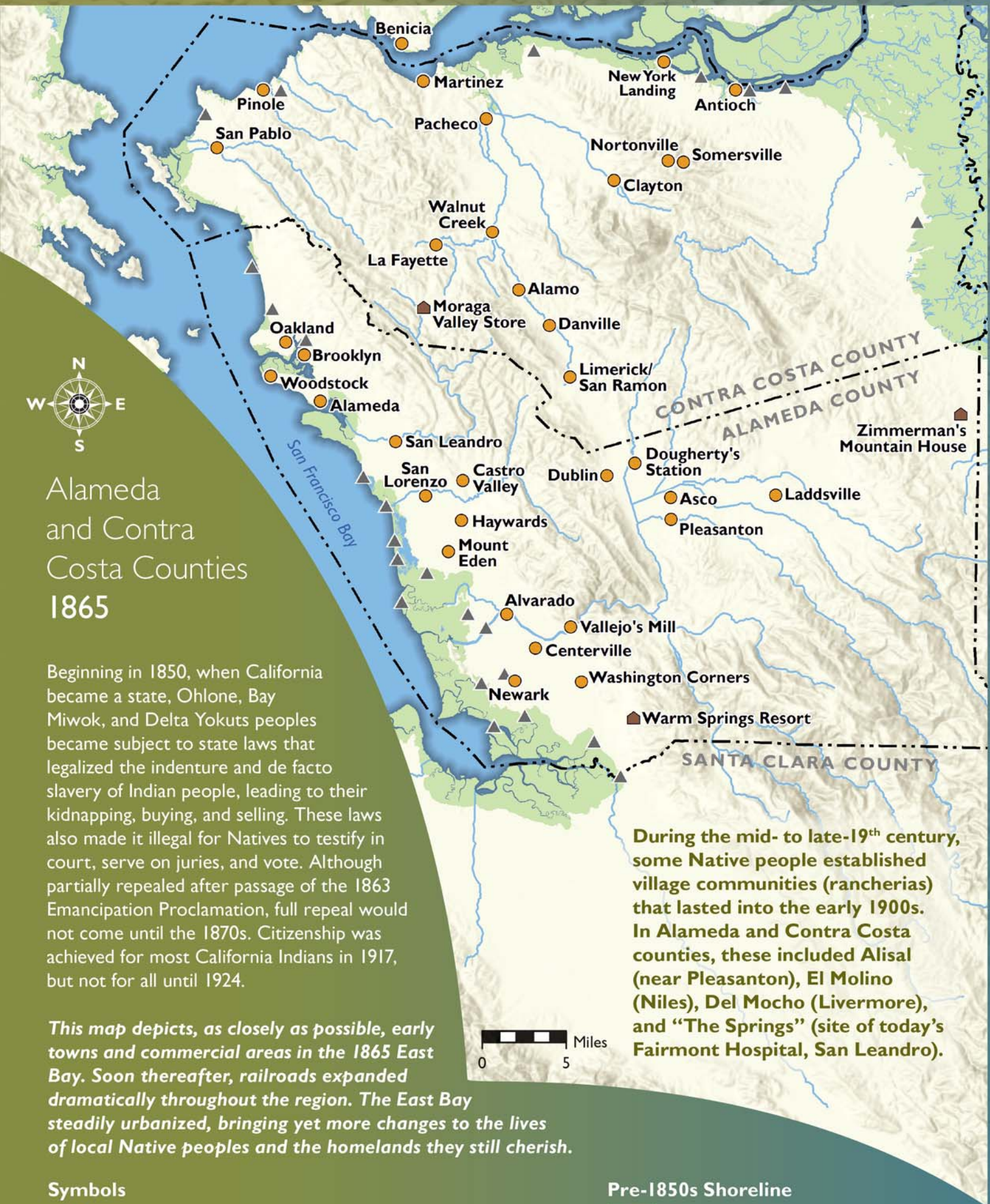
- Town
- Commercial building
- Landing
- County lines

Pre-1850s Shoreline

- Historic marshes and/or mudflats
- Water
- Land and rivers



During the mid- to late-19th century, some Native people established village communities (rancherias) that lasted into the early 1900s. In Alameda and Contra Costa counties, these included Alisal (near Pleasanton), El Molino (Niles), Del Mocho (Livermore), and “The Springs” (site of today’s Fairmont Hospital, San Leandro).





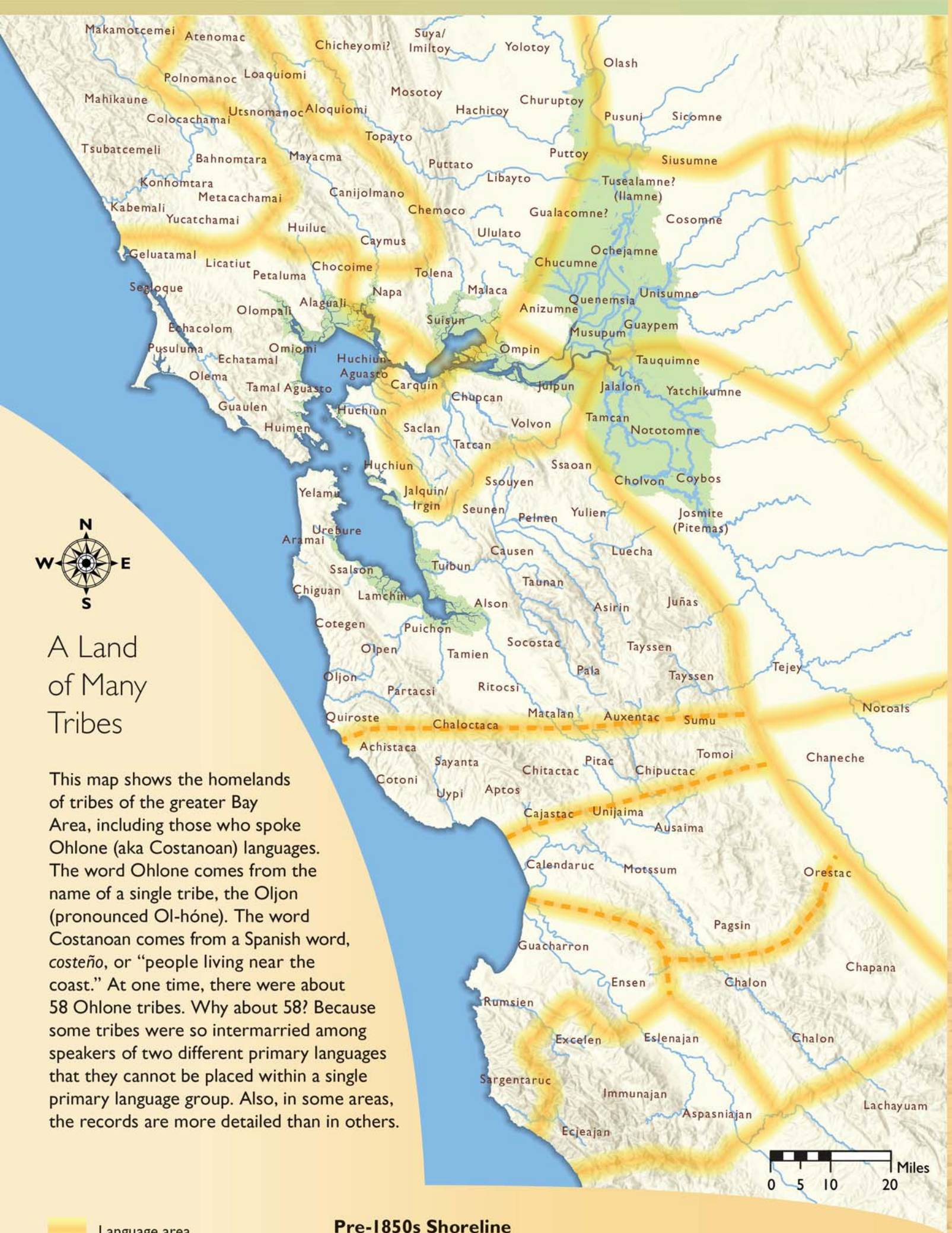
A Land of Many Languages

This map reflects the most current research by linguists about the many languages spoken by Native peoples in the region now known as the Bay Area, *circa* 1770. Some have much more documentation than others. These include Bay Miwok, Delta Yokuts, and six Ohlone languages: Karkin, San Francisco Bay Costanoan, Awaswas, Mutsun, Rumsen, and Chalon. San Francisco Bay Costanoan had three dialects: Ramaytush, Chochenyo, and Tamyen. Today's Ohlones have restored and are speaking three of these languages: Chochenyo, Mutsun, and Rumsen, the primary languages of today's East Bay, San Juan Bautista/Gilroy/Watsonville area, and Monterey area, respectively.

- * Languages spoken and awakening
- Language area
- Language area estimate
- ● ● Dialect
- Ohlone/Costanoan languages

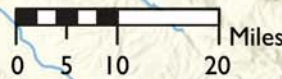
Pre-1850s Shoreline

- Historic marshes and/or mudflats
- Water
- Land and rivers



A Land of Many Tribes

This map shows the homelands of tribes of the greater Bay Area, including those who spoke Ohlone (aka Costanoan) languages. The word Ohlone comes from the name of a single tribe, the Oljon (pronounced Ol-hóne). The word Costanoan comes from a Spanish word, *costeño*, or “people living near the coast.” At one time, there were about 58 Ohlone tribes. Why about 58? Because some tribes were so intermarried among speakers of two different primary languages that they cannot be placed within a single primary language group. Also, in some areas, the records are more detailed than in others.



- Language area
- Language area estimate
- Historic marshes and/or mudflats
- Water
- Land and rivers

Pre-1850s Shoreline

Native Peoples of the Region Now Known as the East Bay



Prior to Euro-American intrusion, about 23 independent tribes lived in the places now known as Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Each tribe had between 200 and 300 members who lived in three to five permanent villages and several seasonal camps. Each tribal homeland covered about eight to twelve square miles. Each tribe had its own leaders and a culture that, while similar among neighboring groups, also varied. Everyone spoke two or more languages, and marriages occurred between neighboring groups.

For tribal name pronunciations, use Spanish vowel and consonant pronunciation. Tribes printed in all capital letters had the largest populations.

The Region Now Known as the East Bay

This map shows the locations of East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) parklands and trails in today's Alameda and Contra Costa counties. It depicts the modern bayshore, with its greatly diminished marshland, mudflat, and watershed habitats, the result of post-intrusion draining, filling, diking, levee construction, and reservoir building. Some wetland habitats are being restored thanks to the collective efforts of multiple non-profits, nongovernmental organizations, volunteers, and governmental agencies, including EBRPD. For docent/volunteer opportunities in the Regional Parks, please go to ebparks.org.



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CREDITS *Project Coordinator and Text:* Beverly R. Ortiz; *Project Assistant:* Barbara Reichardt; *Research:* Beverly R. Ortiz, Barbara Reichardt, and Philip Webster; *Cartography:* Kara Boettcher, Hillary Van Austen, and Philip Webster; *Design:* Hillary Van Austen; *Photographs:* Beverly R. Ortiz ("Today's Ohlone, Bay Miwok, and Delta Yokuts Peoples" page) and Linda Yamane (basket on cover, abalone shell with necklace, and basketry imagery throughout); *Ohlone/Bay Miwok Reviewers:* Monica V. Arellano (Muwékma), Isaac Bojorquez (Rumsien), Gregg Castro (Rumsien/T'rowc'raahl), Sabrina Garibay (Jalquin/Saclan), Ruth Orta (Jalquin/Saclan), and Linda Yamane (Rumsien); *Historical Fact Checking:* Bill Clarkson (San Ramon historian), Diane Curry (Curator and Archivist) and John Christian (Associate Archivist, Hayward Historical Society Museum), Elizabeth Isles (Director) and Lafayette Foldaud (Volunteer, Dublin Heritage Park and Museums), Alan Leventhal (Anthropology Department, San Jose State University), Dewey Livingston (Historian, Nicasio Historical Society), Ken MacLennan (Curator, Pleasanton Museum on Main), and William Mero (Historian, Contra Costa County Historical Society); *EBRPD Reviewers:* Ira Bletz, David Drucekhammer, Jonathan Hobbs, Carol Johnson, Anne Kassebaum, Mona Koh, Beverly Lane, Jaskaran Singh, and David Zuckermann); *Base Map Data:* ESRI, San Francisco Estuary Institute (Delta Historical Ecology GIS Data, 2012, sfei.org/content/delta-historical-ecology-gis-data and Bay Area EcoAtlas VI.50b4 1998: Geographic Information System of Wetland Habitats Past and Present, sfei.org/content/ecoatlas-version-150b4-1998), U.S. Department of the Interior (Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory website 2017, fws.gov/wetlands/), and U.S. Geological Survey; *Tribes, Languages, Missionization Areas, and Land and Sea Routes Map Data:* Randall Milliken (Ethnohistorian), Tammara Norton (Art Director, Far Western Anthropological Research Group), U.S. Department of the Interior (National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area), and these books — *Historical Atlas of California* (1974), *A Time of Little Choice* (1995), and *Ohlone/Costanoan Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula and Their Neighbors, Yesterday and Today* (2005).