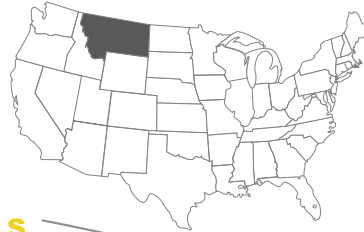


Established 1889
41st state

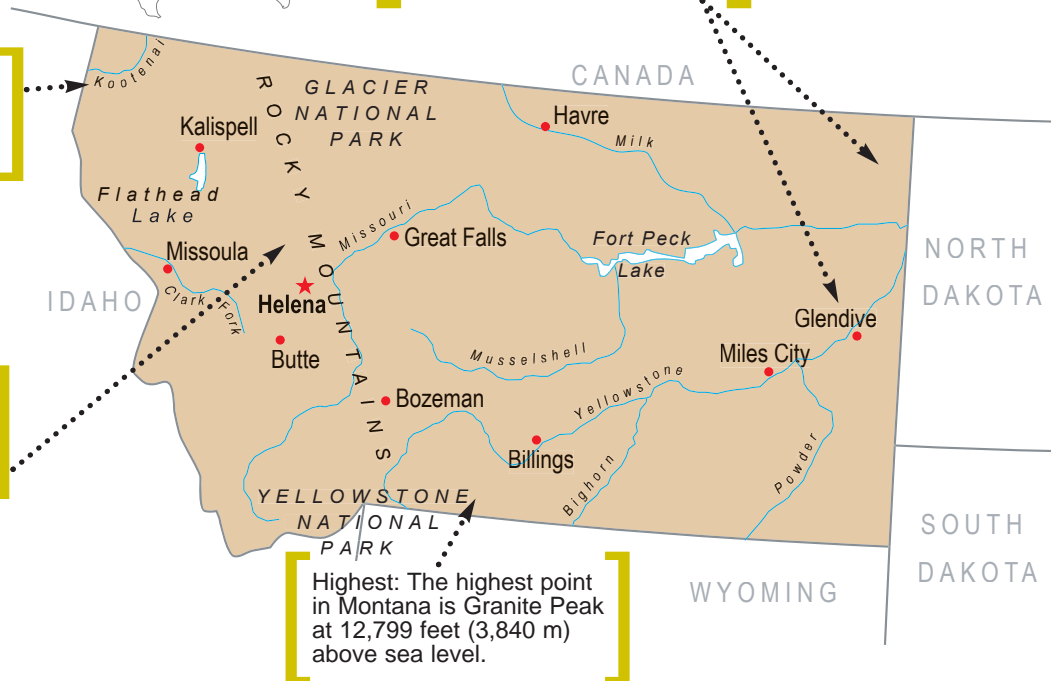


EXTREMES

Lowest: The lowest point is along the Kootenai River in northwestern Montana at 1,800 feet (549 m).

Coldest: The lowest recorded temperature was -70°F (-57°C) at Rogers Pass in 1954.

Hottest: The highest recorded temperature was 117°F (47°C) at Glendive in 1893 and at Medicine Lake in 1937.



Highest: The highest point in Montana is Granite Peak at 12,799 feet (3,840 m) above sea level.

Climate

Because of its northern location, Montana's climate can be extreme. But the weather varies greatly depending on where you are. Average daytime temperatures in the state range from 28°F (-2°C) in January to 85°F (29°C) in July. However, on the plains in eastern Montana, the summers can be very hot and the winters very cold. Winter temperatures are frequently below 0°F (-18°C). Sometimes, the cold weather is moderated by warm *chinook winds* (warm dry winds that blow from the Rocky Mountains). Much of this region is also dry, with an average of only about 13 inches (33 cm) of precipitation a year. In western Montana, winters tend to be milder and summers cooler. The weather is also wetter. The Rocky Mountains receive up to 25 feet (8 m) of snow in some years.



in western Montana. This area consists of high mountains and deep valleys. The Great Plains region covers the eastern two-thirds of the state. This area is mainly flat, ideal for grazing cattle and farming. The state's largest river is the Missouri, which flows eastward and eventually empties into the Mississippi River. Rivers on the west side of Montana, such as the Clark Fork and Kootenai Rivers, flow westward to the Pacific Ocean.

Resources and Economy

Montana became known as the Treasure State because of its mineral resources. The minerals that contribute the most to the state's economy today are coal, oil, natural gas, copper, silver, and gold. But there are other "treasures" in Montana. Farms and rangelands are valuable agricultural resources. Wheat is Montana's leading crop. Barley, oats, and sugar beets are important as well. Montanans also harvest the state's vast forestlands, producing lumber, plywood, and paper products. But the largest sector of Montana's economy involves service industries. This includes financial services, real estate, government work, and trade. Montana's colorful history and scenic beauty contribute to a thriving tourist industry.

Geography

Montana is the fourth largest state, with a total area of 147,046 square miles (380,847 sq km). Only Alaska, California, and Texas are larger. Montana is made up of basically two regions: the Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains. The Rocky Mountains are located

History

Plains Indians

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, Native American tribes lived in Montana. The Flathead, Kootenai, Shoshone, and Kalispel lived in the Rockies. They hunted, fished, and gathered nuts. The Blackfeet, Cheyenne, Crow, and others lived on the Great Plains. These tribes survived primarily by farming. But beginning in the 1600s, Spanish traders brought horses to the area, which they traded for buffalo hides and jewelry. Horses forever changed the lives of many Native Americans, especially the Plains Indians. With horses, they could give up farming and hunt buffalo over a much wider area, moving their villages close to where the herds roamed. The Plains Indians used the buffalo meat for food, the hides to make clothes and tepees, and the bones to make tools. They even used the buffalo droppings or chips to burn in their fires.



Louisiana Purchase

There were no European settlements in what we know now as Montana until the 1800s. In 1803, the United States bought the Louisiana Territory from France for \$15 million. The new territory included most of present-day Montana. President Thomas Jefferson later sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to explore the new territory. Lewis and Clark

traveled up the Missouri River to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, mapping the region and recording their observations about the people and places they encountered. Their explorations increased interest in the West.

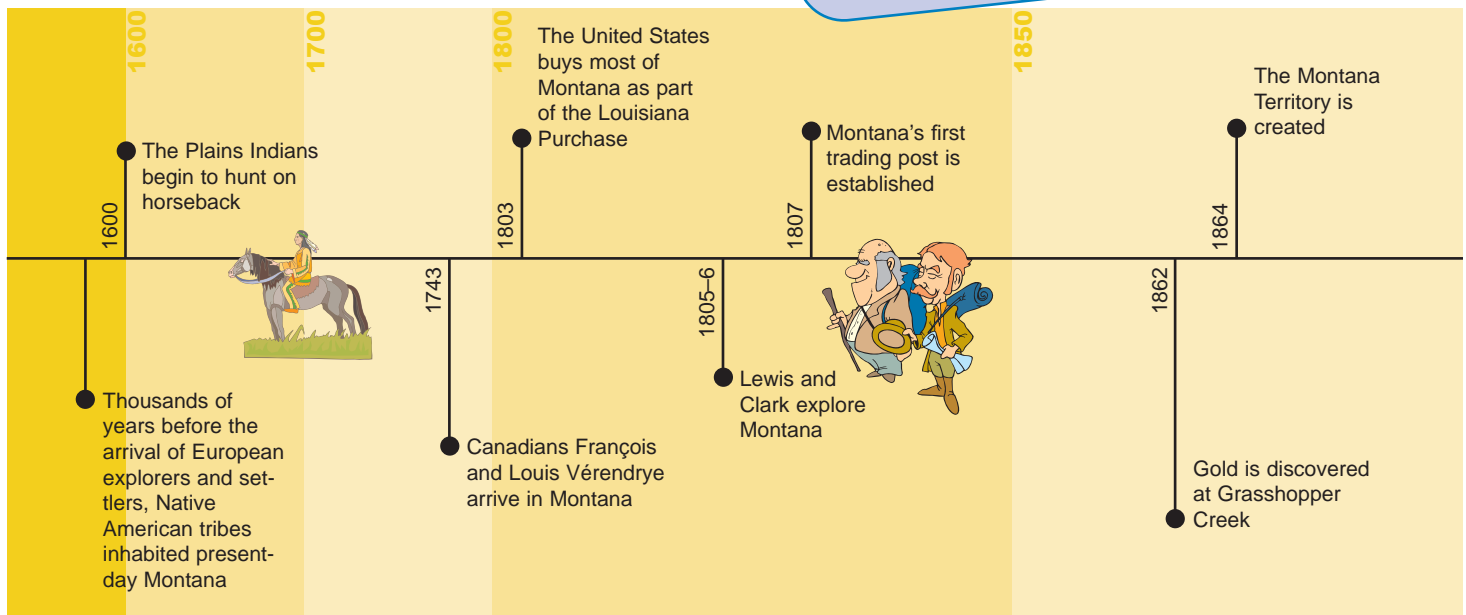
Traders and Trappers

While traveling through Montana, Lewis and Clark noticed many beavers. Not long after the two explorers returned to the East to report their discoveries, fur companies began building trading companies in Montana. Manuel Lisa started the first trading post in 1807 at the mouth of the Bighorn River. Other trading posts were opened later. For the next 40 years, trappers and traders came *(cont. next page)*



Cultural Note

Montana's connection to its western past is seen in its cultural life. Charles Russell, one of the state's most famous artists, frequently painted Western subjects such as cowboys, buffalo, and cattle drives. Montana author A. B. Guthrie wrote about Native Americans and fur trappers. Rodeos, ghost towns, square dancing, frontier museums, and traditional Native American powwows are other ways that Montanans maintain their interest in their Western heritage.



in search of beaver pelts. The pelts could be sold and made into fashionable hats.

Montana Gold Rush

After gold was discovered in California in 1848, people started to look for gold in other parts of the country as well. In 1862, prospectors discovered gold at Grasshopper Creek. The gold rush had begun. Miners poured into Montana in hopes of striking it rich. Towns sprang up almost overnight. Life in these towns could be rough since there was little government to help enforce the laws. Disputes over claims could result in violence. And outlaws sometimes stole shipments of gold. But the gold rush helped bring settlers to Montana. Virginia City, Butte, and Helena all began as mining towns.



for food and clothing. As a result, conflicts erupted between white settlers and the Native Americans. Eventually, the government decided to move all of the state's native inhabitants to reservations. But some tribes fought back. In one of the most famous battles, a group of Sioux under the leadership of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse defeated Colonel George Armstrong Custer and his troops at the Battle of the Little Bighorn in June of 1876. Although the Sioux won this battle, by 1880 almost all of Montana's Native Americans had been moved to reservations.

Rankin



Sitting Bull



Kniewel



Cooper



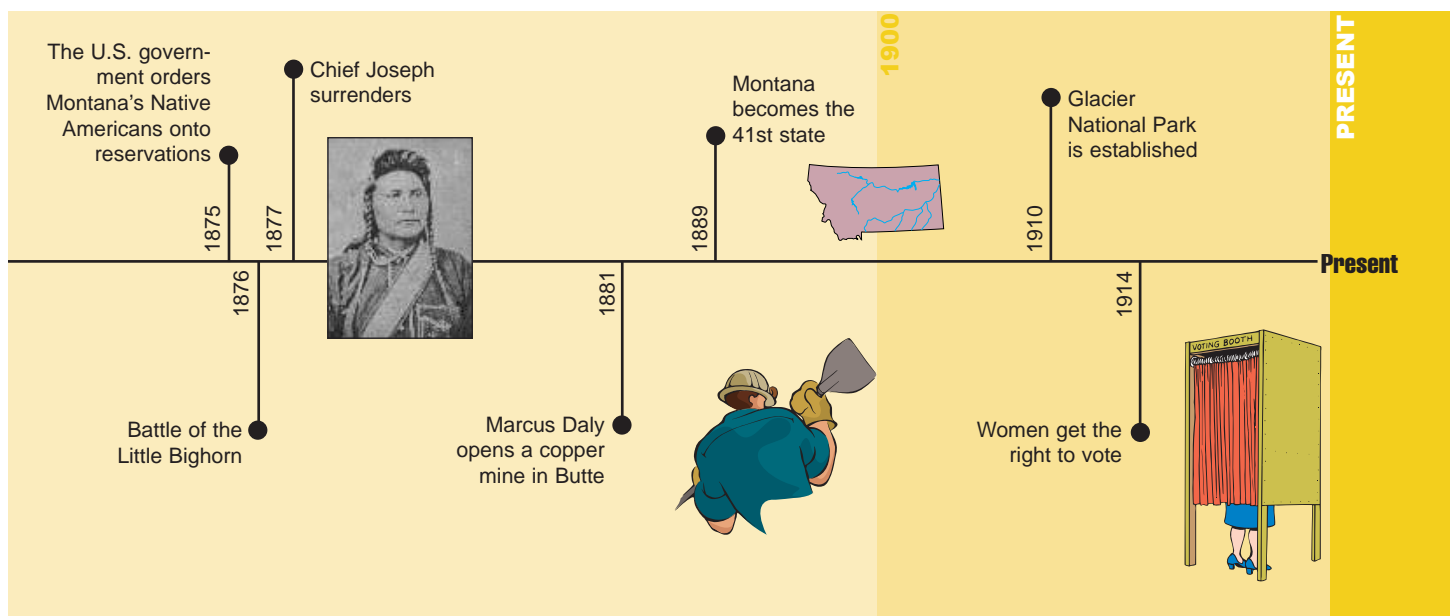
Famous People

Gary Cooper: Actor
James Welch: Author
A. B. Guthrie: Author
Jeanette Rankin: First woman to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives
Marcus Daly: Mine owner
David Lynch: Film director
Dana Carvey: Comedian
Evel Kniewel: Motorcycle daredevil
Charles M. Russell: Old West painter
Sitting Bull: Sioux leader
Chet Huntley: Television newscaster



Little Bighorn

As more settlers came to Montana in the 1800s, they wanted space for towns and ranches. They often moved onto lands belonging to Native American tribes. These were lands that the tribes had lived on for hundreds of years. Whites were also responsible for killing the buffalo, which the Native Americans depended on



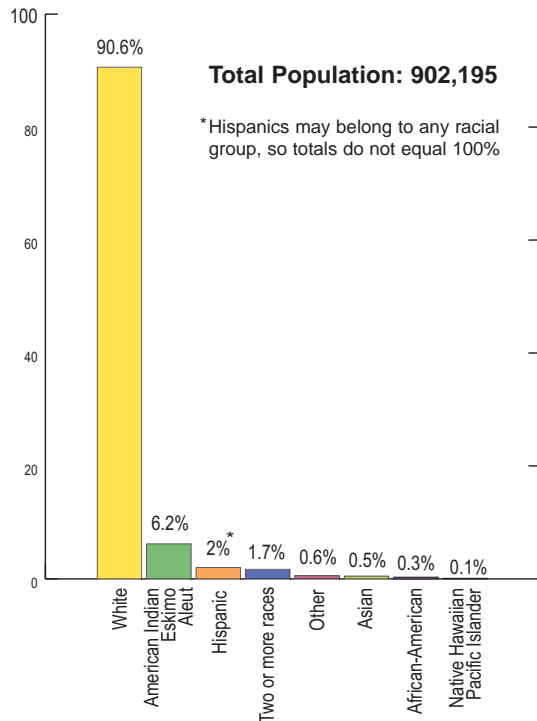
Did You Know?

- *Montana* means “mountain” in Spanish.
- The town of Eureka calls itself the Christmas Tree Capital of the World because of the many thousands of Christmas trees it produces each year.
- A world record for temperature change in a 24-hour period was set in Browning in 1916. The temperature dropped 100 degrees from 44°F (7°C) to -56°F (-49°C).
- Glacier National Park has 250 lakes within its boundaries.
- In Montana the elk, deer, and antelope populations outnumber the humans.
- Montana is home to seven Native American reservations.
- Montana’s rivers and streams provide water for three oceans.
- Montana has the largest grizzly bear population in the lower 48 states.
- Yellowstone National Park, in southern Montana and northern Wyoming, was the first national park in the country.



Population

Although it is the fourth largest state, Montana ranks 44th in terms of population. On average, there are only about 6 people per square mile (2 per sq km). By comparison, the national average is 74 per square mile (29 per sq km). A little more than half of the population lives in urban areas. Most Montanans can trace their ancestry to western Europe. But the state does have a relatively large Native American population. Most of them live on one of seven reservations. The largest cities in the state are Billings, Missoula, and Great Falls.



State Symbols



State Animal
Grizzly bear—Adult grizzlies may grow to be 8 feet (2 m) in length and can weigh as much as 1,000 pounds.



State Flower
Bitterroot—Both Native Americans and early pioneers ate the root of this plant. It was adopted as the state flower in 1895.



State Tree
Ponderosa pine—Early Montanans used wood from this tree for homes, telegraph poles, railroad ties, and mine braces.



State Bird
Western meadowlark—Five states claim the western meadowlark as their state bird.

Government

Capital: Helena
U.S. Senators: 2
U.S. Representatives: 1
Counties: 56

- The legislature meets in odd-numbered years in January.
- Native Americans who live on reservations have their own police and judicial system.

State Motto: *Oro y Plata*—This Spanish phrase means “Gold and Silver.”

For more information: See www.state.mt.us or contact the Montana Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 1730, Helena, MT 59624; phone (800) VISIT-MT; Web site www.visitmt.com.

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