Indigenous Nations, Race, and Coastal Access in California

Stories of Race and Coastal Access Panel
Restore America’s Estuaries Summit

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Origin Stories: Before there was California

Photo Credit Militant Angeleno
The Native peoples of California | Map by Timara Lotah Link, who adds: “Although many Native people in California lost their lives and cultures during the Mission and Gold Rush eras, they are reviving their languages, continuing their cultural traditions, and teaching us about this place we call home.”

Doctrine of Discovery & Manifest Destiny

• Doctrine of Discovery
In the bull of 1452, Pope Nicholas directed King Alfonso to "capture, vanquish, and subdue the saracens, pagans, and other enemies of Christ," to "put them into perpetual slavery," and "to take all their possessions and property."

• Manifest Destiny
The belief that the United States has some unique moral virtues that other countries do not possess; the idea that the United States has a mission to redeem the world by spreading democracy, and a divinely ordained destiny to accomplish these tasks.
Doctrine of Discovery and Coastal Colonization in California
Environmental Colonization in Coastal California

In central Mexico, transformation of the landcape from introduced plant species had taken more than 300 years..."the magnitude of the change, good and bad, was almost greater than the mind could encompass or the heart endure..."

According to the archaeological record at several missions, this same alteration was accomplished in just over 70 years in coastal Alta California. The ecological transformation of California was underway well before the gold rush, and had a profound effect on both the native and nonnative human population. *Alta California Missions and the Pre-1849 Transformation of Coastal Lands* Author(s): Rebecca Allen Source: Historical Archaeology, Vol. 44, No. 3, Environmental and Economic Archaeologies of Missions, Colonies, and Plantations (2010)
That a war of extermination will continue to be waged between the races, until the Indian race becomes extinct. must be expected. While we cannot anticipate this result but with painful regret, the inevitable destiny of the race is beyond the power or wisdom of man to avert.

Governor Peter H. Burnett, January 7, 1851
State-Financed Attempted California Indian Genocide
Contemporary Stories—Coastal Native Nations and Environmental Justice

- Coastal Commission Tribal Consultation Policy

“the Commission acknowledges Tribal sovereignty and understands that California’s Tribes and their members have long served as stewards of the state’s important coastal resources, and possess unique and valuable knowledge and practices for conserving and managing these resources in a sustainable manner, and in a manner consistent with the spirit and intent of the Coastal Act.”
Contemporary Stories—Coastal Native Nations and Environmental Justice

- **State Lands Commission Environmental Justice Policy**

“The Commission recognizes the critical connection California’s Native Nations have to the environment and acknowledges that the injustices they have endured over generations, including the destruction of natural resources that sustained their communities and systematic displacement from their lands, give tribal communities a unique perspective on environmental justice concerns...Incorporating tribally-identified metrics and narratives is a critical part of an environmental justice impact analysis. The Commission will use this policy together with its Tribal Consultation Policy to amplify tribal voices.”
Contemporary Coastal Stories of Resilience
Contemporary Stories: Ocean Protectors Coalition—No Offshore Drilling in California!

https://www.facebook.com/OceanProtectorsCoalition/
Thank You!

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