The Southwest Regional Gap Project: Nevada Topography

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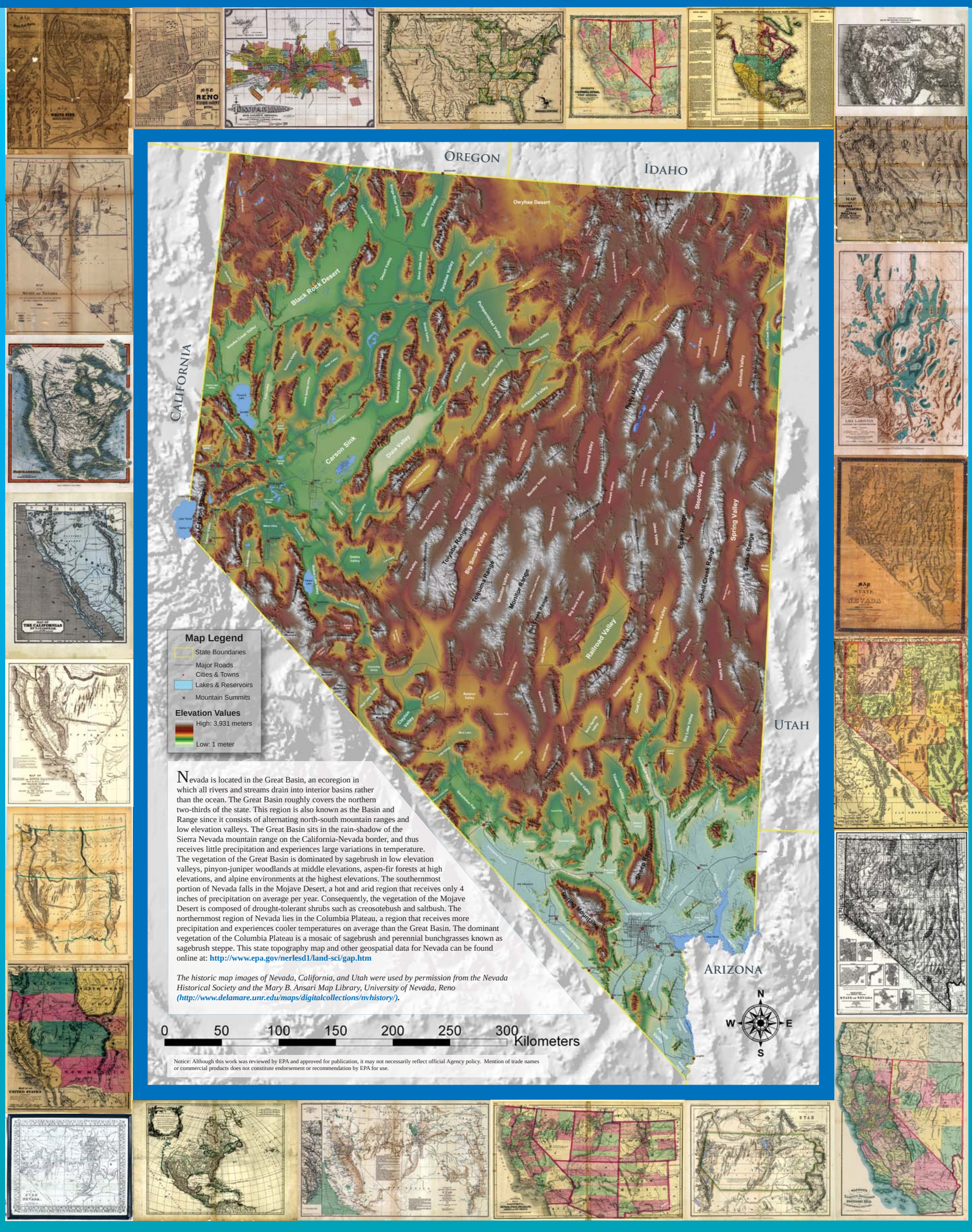

Nevada is located in the Great Basin, an ecoregion in which all rivers and streams drain into interior basins rather than the ocean. The Great Basin roughly covers the northern two-thirds of the state. This region is also known as the Basin and Range since it consists of alternating north-south mountain ranges and low elevation valleys. The Great Basin sits in the rain-shadow of the Sierra Nevada mountain range on the California-Nevada border, and thus receives little precipitation and experiences large variations in temperature. The vegetation of the Great Basin is dominated by sagebrush in low elevation valleys, pinyon-juniper woodlands at middle elevations, aspen-fir forests at high elevations, and alpine environments at the highest elevations. The southernmost portion of Nevada falls in the Mojave Desert, a hot and arid region that receives only 4 inches of precipitation on average per year. Consequently, the vegetation of the Mojave Desert is composed of drought-tolerant shrubs such as creosotebush and saltbush. The northernmost region of Nevada lies in the Columbia Plateau, a region that receives more precipitation and experiences cooler temperatures on average than the Great Basin. The dominant vegetation of the Columbia Plateau is a mosaic of sagebrush and perennial bunchgrasses known as sagebrush steppe. This state topography map and other geospatial data for Nevada can be found online at: **http://www.epa.gov/nerlesd1/land-sci/gap.htm**

The historic map images of Nevada, California, and Utah were used by permission from the Nevada Historical Society and the Mary B. Ansari Map Library, University of Nevada, Reno ***(http://www.delamare.unr.edu/maps/digitalcollections/nvhistory/)***.

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