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## **‘Native Grandeur’** California’s Natural Landscapes Preserved on Canvas



LOS ANGELES -- The beauty of California’s striking landscapes and clear, intense natural light have inspired painters for more than 100 years. “California’s Native Grandeur: Preserving Vanishing Landscapes” is an exhibition of more than 40 oil paintings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries by artists whose works inspired early environmentalists. The exhibition opens June 8, and runs until September 1, 2003 at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. These light-filled canvases depict many visions of

California, from the South Coast’s gleaming beaches to the Sierra Nevada’s rugged peaks.

“Visitors to Native Grandeur will experience California as they never have before,” said Dan Danzig, manager of special exhibits at the Natural History Museum. “These brilliant paintings are a testament to the beauty of our state.”

### **Featuring the Best Work of Renowned California Painters**

The exhibition features some of the best work of such renowned California painters as William Wendt, Granville Redmond, Maynard Dixon, William Keith, Thomas Hill, Paul Grimm and Guy Rose. These artists worked in a Romantic-Realist style associated with the French Barbizon school. Southern California landscape painting was dominated, beginning the 1890s, by Impressionists whose subject was the natural light on the landscape, painted outdoors in what became known as the plein-air style. It is based on the book “Native Grandeur: Preserving California’s Vanishing Landscapes,” published by The Nature Conservancy of California.

The exhibition begins in the deserts, with their crystal-clear light and deep shadows. Next, the Sierra Nevada, famous for its rugged terrain and the breathtaking national monuments Yosemite, Lake Tahoe and Mount Whitney, also includes a gentler landscape of pine-covered slopes, wetlands, streams, lakes and meadows.

The North Coast and Shasta-Cascades are some of California's wildest and most remote landscapes, which today are threatened by logging and the encroachment of suburban housing. The Great Central Valley, which has been changed drastically in the past 150 years by agriculture and development, is the site of an ancient sea and one of the flattest places on earth.

The populous Central Coast, stretching from San Luis Obispo County to Marin County, is varied in landscape, from beaches and wetlands to forests and coastal mountain ranges. The exhibit ends with California's species-rich South Coast, from Santa Barbara south to Baja California, a region of rugged hills, steep mountains, gentle valley, deep canyons, and spectacular cliffs overlooking sandy beaches.

### **Organizers**

"California's Native Grandeur: Preserving Vanishing Landscapes" was produced by The Nature Conservancy of California in partnership with The Irvine Museum, Irvine, California.

### **Public Information**

The Museum is open on weekdays from 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and weekends from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Museum admission is \$8 for adults, \$5.50 for students and senior citizens, and \$2 for children ages 5-12. Children under 5 and Museum Members are free. For additional information, the public may call 213-763-DINO or visit [www.nhm.org](http://www.nhm.org).

### **Editor's Note:**

For images depicting this exhibit or to set up interviews contact us at 213/763-3538 or [media@nhm.org](mailto:media@nhm.org).

### **Museum Background**

The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is a national leader in research, exhibitions and education. Founded in 1913, it is one of the preeminent natural and cultural history museums in the United States, safeguarding more than 33 million specimens and artifacts in its collections. The kid-friendly Discovery Center welcomes children and families with hands-on natural history specimens. The accompanying Insect Zoo, the largest in the Western United States, features live insects from around the world. Permanent exhibit halls include dramatic collections of fossils and dinosaurs, exquisite gems and minerals, grand animal dioramas, a California history hall, and a stunning Native American hall, along with ever-changing special exhibitions. For further information about the Museum, visit the Museum's website at [www.nhm.org](http://www.nhm.org) or call (213) 763-DINO.

The mission of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County is to inspire wonder, discovery and responsibility for our natural and cultural worlds.

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