The approximately 720,000 Californians who claim Native American heritage today represent 12% of the total Native American population in the United States. This includes a large number of non-Californian Indians who have migrated into the state from other regions. The United States government currently recognizes 109 Indian tribes in California, and there are 78 entities seeking recognition. Native American lands in the state include nearly 100 separate reservations or Rancherias as well as a number of individual Indian trust allotments. Because many American Indians were forced from their ancestral lands, these lands are not always the same as their original territories. In addition, many Native Americans -- from California tribes and from other states, Canada, and Mexico -- live and work in towns and cities.

Image below: Native Americans throughout California continue to practice and preserve their unique cultures. This dancer was at a celebration called a pow-wow in 2015.