



**What you probably don't know about  
Paso Robles...**  
It's even cooler than you think!

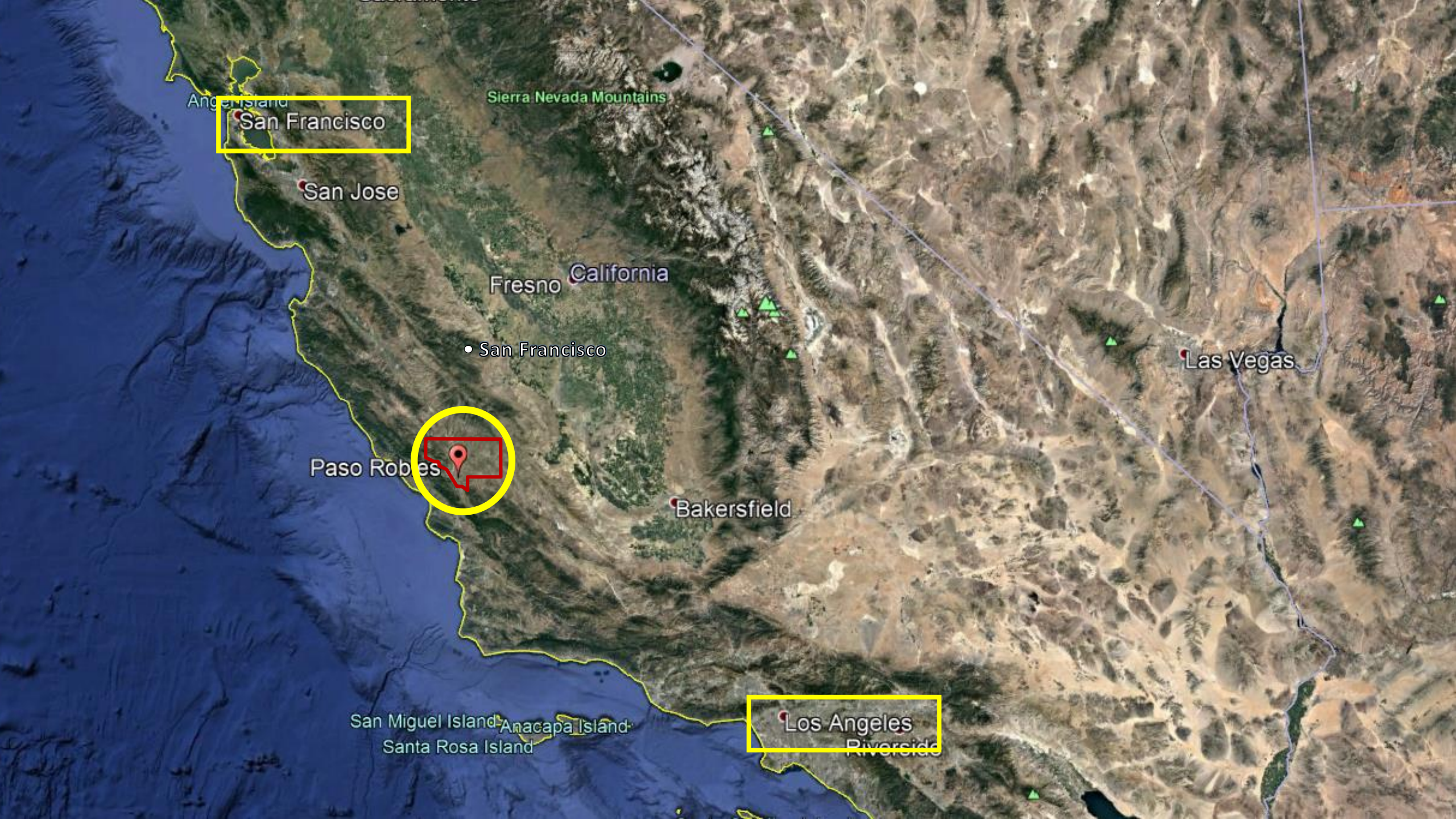
**Jim Gerakaris, CWE**  
Winery Sommelier and Wine Educator  
JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery

# Barton Family Wines

## 2021 Tiny Dancer - Picpoul Blanc

- 100% picpoul blanc
  - Old Oak vineyard –
    - Willow Creek District, Paso Robles
    - Head-trained, dry-farmed
- Winemaking notes:
  - 100% whole cluster pressed.
  - Native yeast fermentation in 20% new acacia barrels / 20% neutral French oak
  - Full ML
  - Aged 5 months sur lie in neutral French oak.
  - Bottled March 31, 2022.
- Abv 12.5%
- Ph3.09, TA 6.6
- 125 cases produced
- Retail \$40
- Winemaker: Joe Barton, Brad Ely Asst. Winemaker





San Francisco

Sierra Nevada Mountains

San Jose

Fresno California

San Francisco

Paso Robles

Bakersfield

Las Vegas

San Miguel Island  
Anacapa Island  
Santa Rosa Island

Los Angeles  
Riverside

# THE ESSENTIALS

- Paso Robles means “Pass of the Oaks”
- Largest and most diverse region in California at 600K+ Acres
- 40,000 planted vineyard acres, 200+ wineries, 64 different varieties grown
- Greatest diurnal temperature swing for wine-growing region in California 35-50° F
- Most Calcareous and Siliceous soils in California





# The Paso Robles AVA

- 1983 - Paso Robles AVA (American Viticultural Area) established with 17 wineries, 556,765 acres
- 2007
  - Independent AVA Committee submits petition to TTB proposing 11 sub-districts based on climate, soil and terrain differences.
  - AB 87 conjunctive labeling law; requiring region's wines to list Paso Robles first and prominently on labels
- 2008 - AVA amended to 612,000 acres, current total

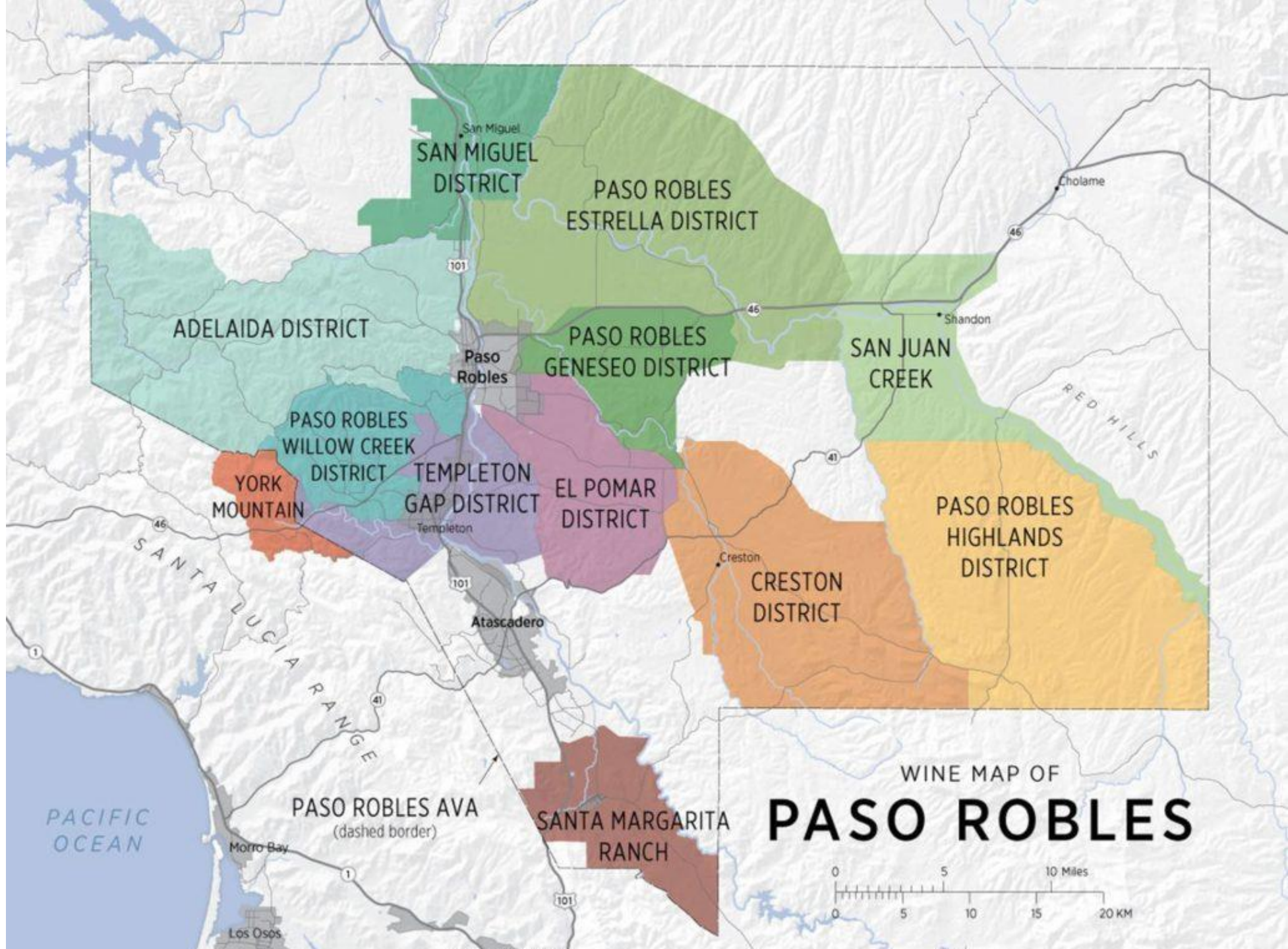
# The Paso Robles AVA

A map of the Paso Robles AVA in California, showing 11 distinct districts. The districts are color-coded: Adelaida (dark red), Creston (yellow), El Pomar (orange), Estrella (red), Geneseo (green), Highlands (purple), San Juan Creek (dark red), Santa Margarita Ranch (dark red), San Miguel (dark red), Templeton Gap (yellow), and Willow Creek (orange). A red outline highlights the entire AVA area. A small inset map of California is visible in the bottom left corner. A logo for 'THE PASO ROBLES AVA' is in the bottom right corner.

In 2014 –

- TTB Approves 11 new districts in Paso Robles
  - Adelaida District
  - Creston District
  - El Pomar District
  - Estrella District
  - Geneseo District
  - Highlands District
  - San Juan Creek
  - Santa Margarita Ranch
  - San Miguel District
  - Templeton Gap District
  - Willow Creek District

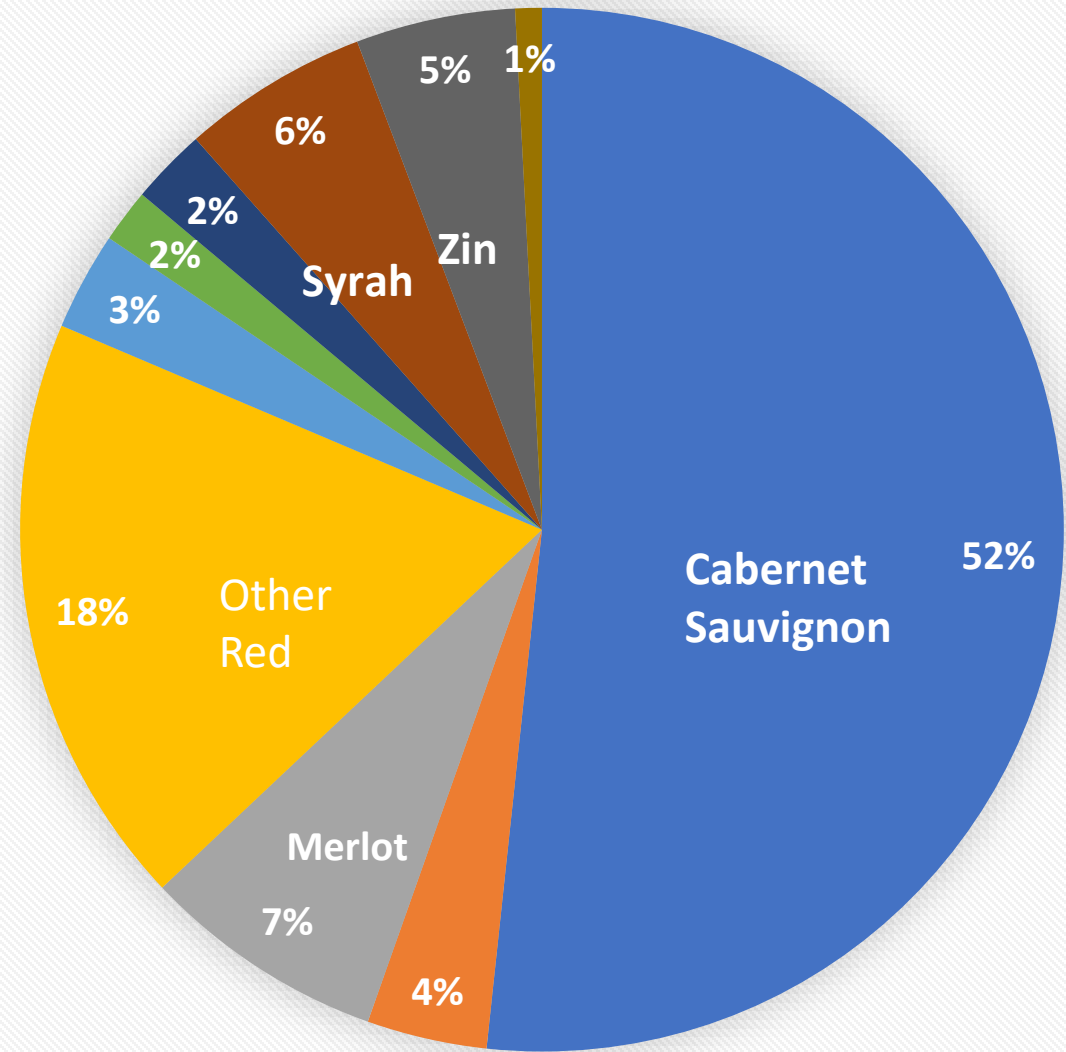
Presently there are over 200 producers in the Paso Robles AVA



WINE MAP OF  
**PASO ROBLES**



# Grape Varieties Grown in Paso Robles



- CABERNET
- CHARDONNAY
- MERLOT
- OTHER RED
- OTHER WHITE
- PINOT NOIR
- SAUV BLANC
- SYRAH
- ZINFANDEL
- TBD

# Clos Solene

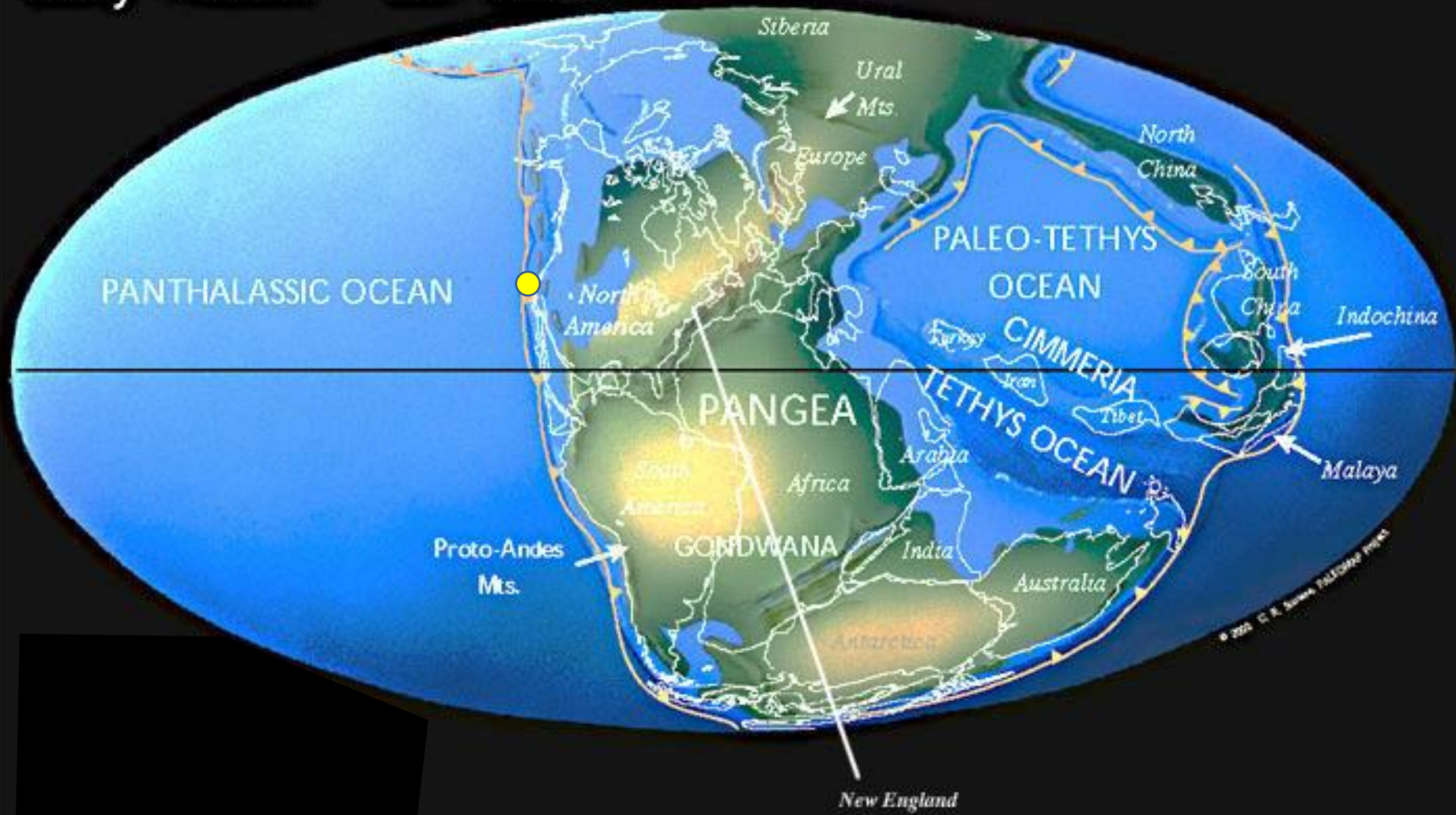
## 2021 Hommage Blanc

- 78% rousanne, 18% viognier, 4% grenache blanc
- 1/3 Estate and remainder from Glenrose, Adelaida and James Berry Vineyards
- Aged 5 months in 300l French oak, 25% new
- Winemaker Guillame Fabre





Early Triassic 237 Ma



## Middle Eocene 50.2 Ma



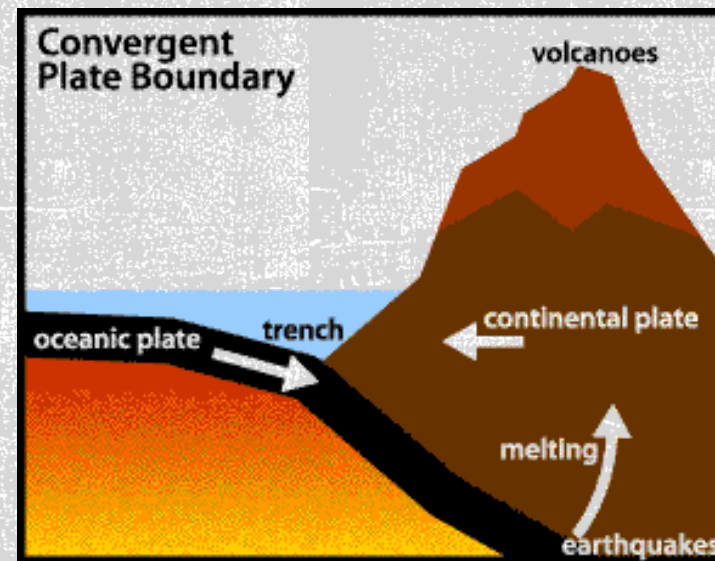
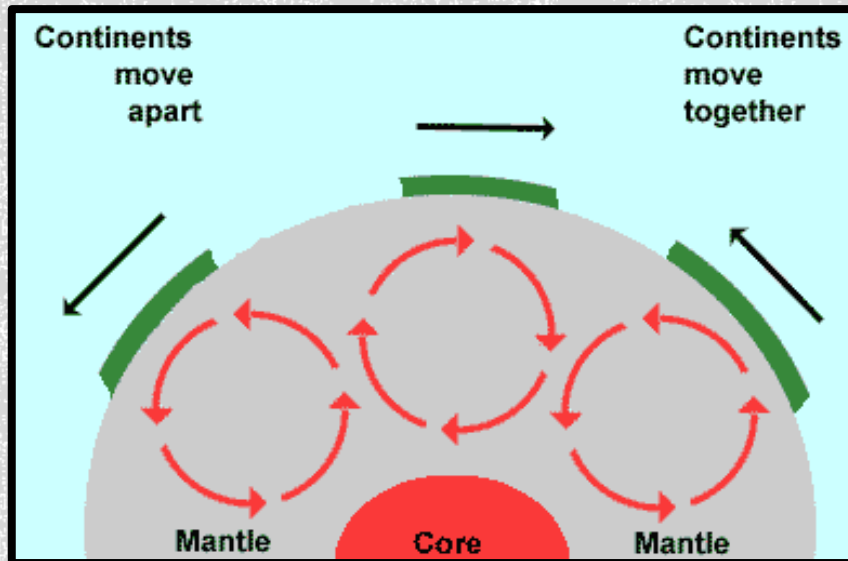
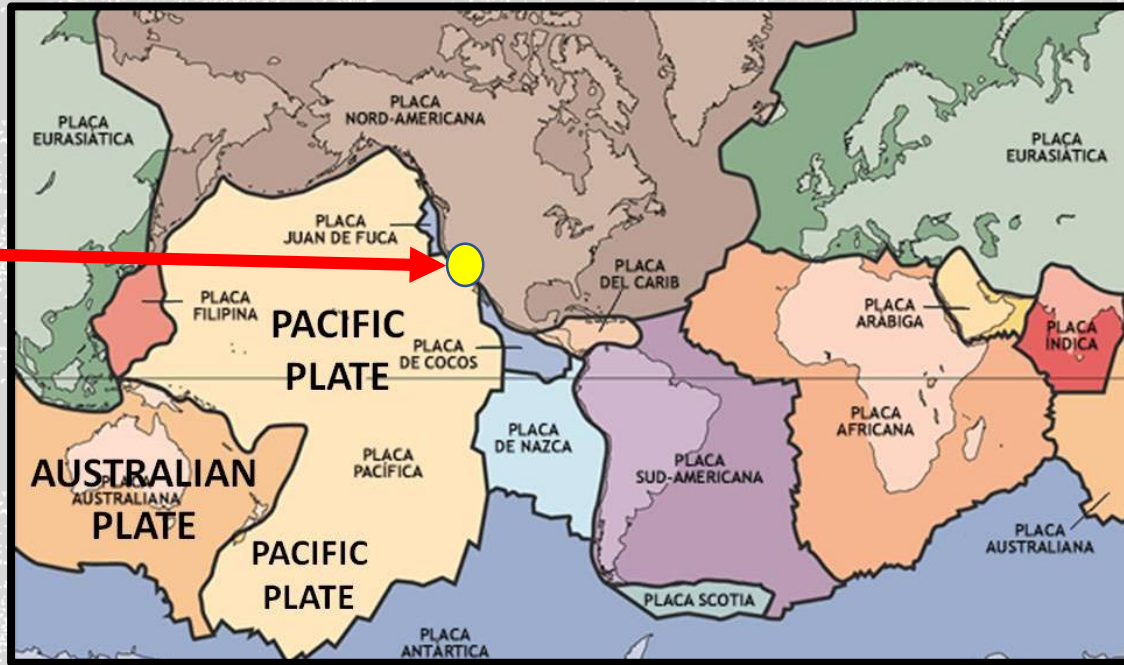
- Ancient seabed developed over millions of years of seafloor deposition of algae (diatoms), shells and other calcareous materials (calcium carbonate)

# Modern World



# Plate Tectonics 101

You are Here





Pacific Plate

North American Plate



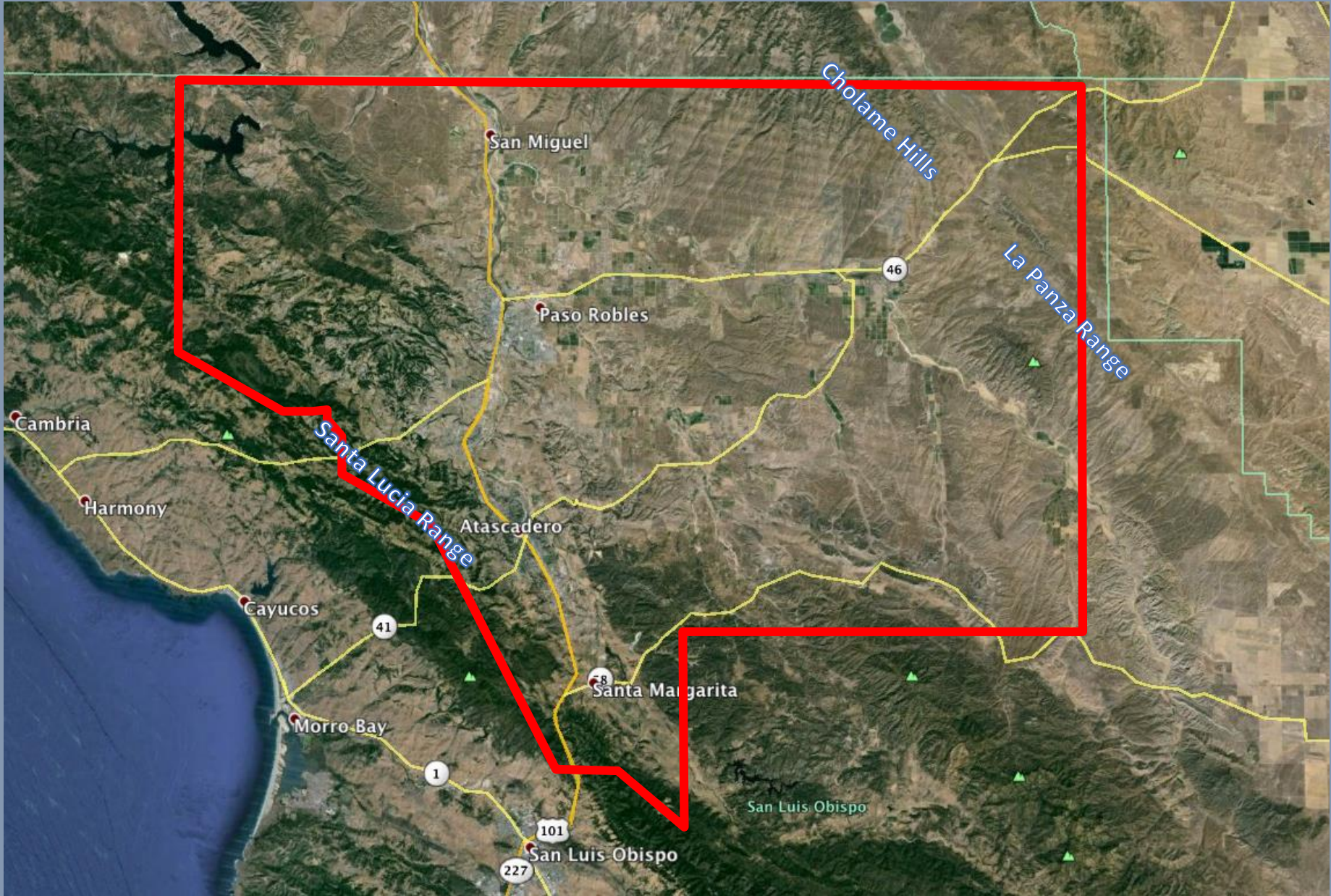
# The San Andreas Fault



# Thacher – 2020 Cinsault

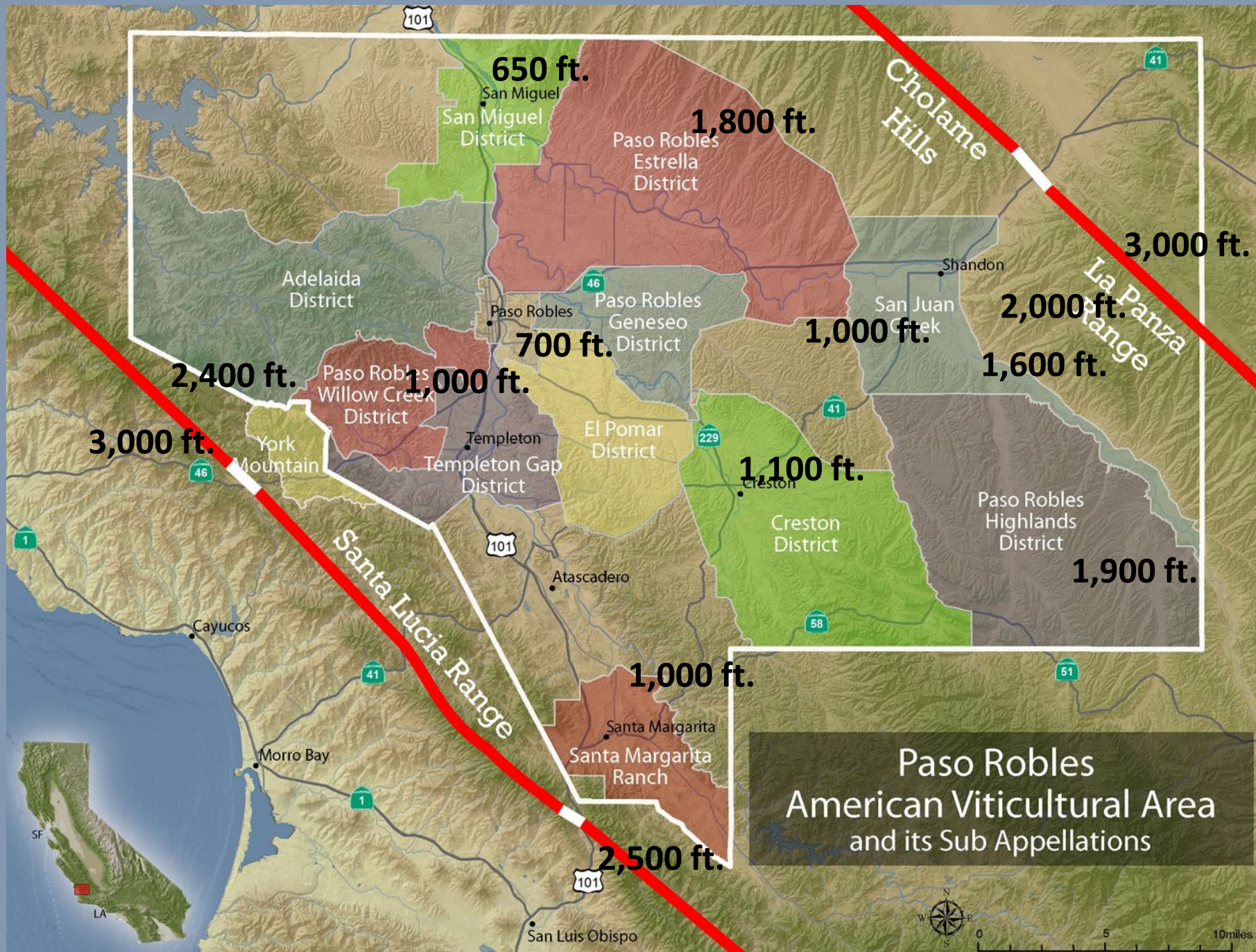
- 100% Cinsault
- Glenrose Vineyard, Willow Creek District
- Picked at 21.5 brix on 9/18/20
- Foot trodden, 7 day cold soak
- Spontaneous fermentation, 100% whole cluster with minimal pigeage basket pressed after 30 days on skins
- Elevage in 900L cement tank and 500l amphora with native ML for 12 months
- No added enzymes, water, acids, tannins or nutrients unfiltered and unfined
- pH 4.05 / TA4.6g/L 13.22% abv
- 167 cases produced
- Bottled August 2020
- \$36
- Winemakers: Sherman Thacher / Daniel Callan Assistant







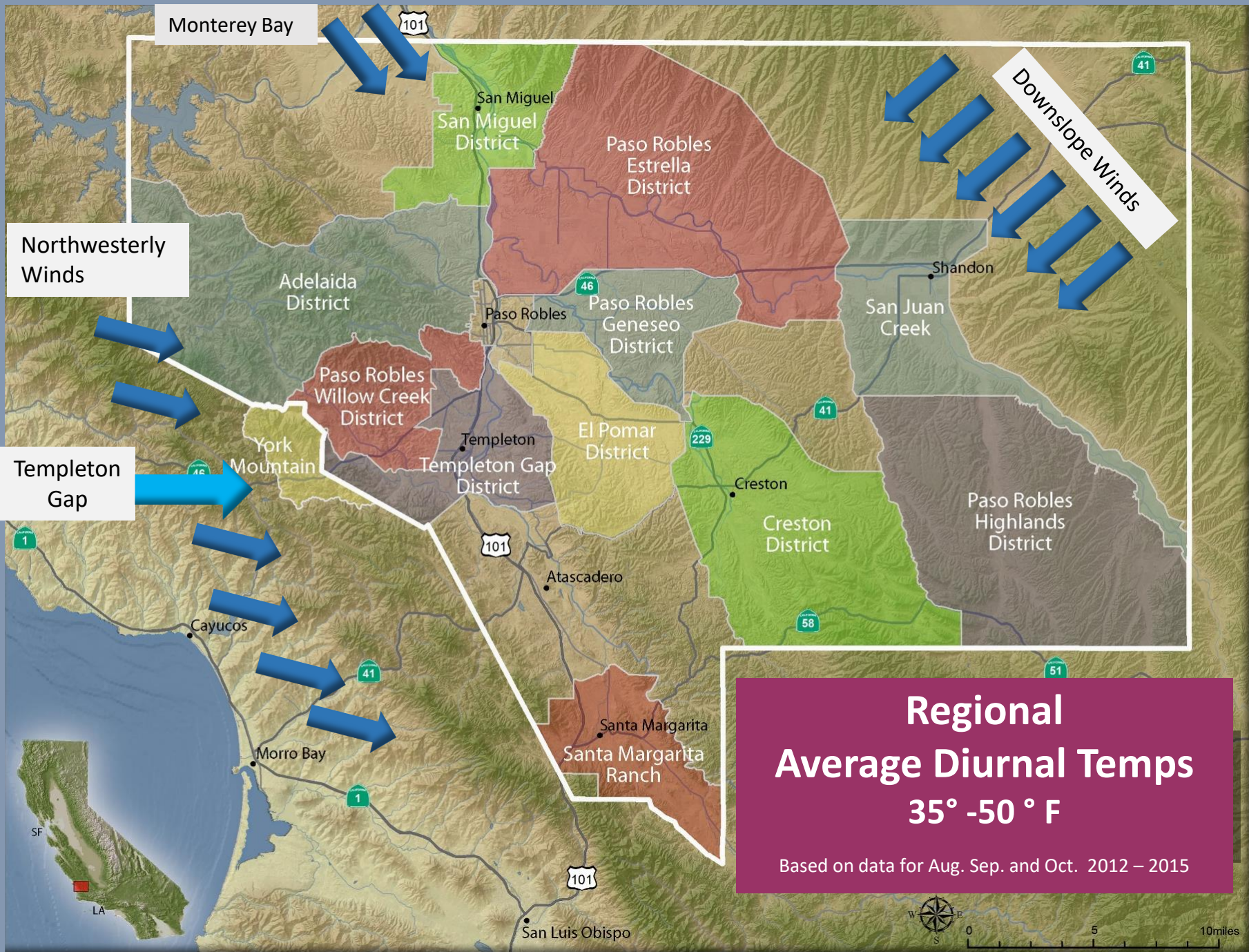
**Paso Robles  
American Viticultural Area  
and its Sub Appellations**





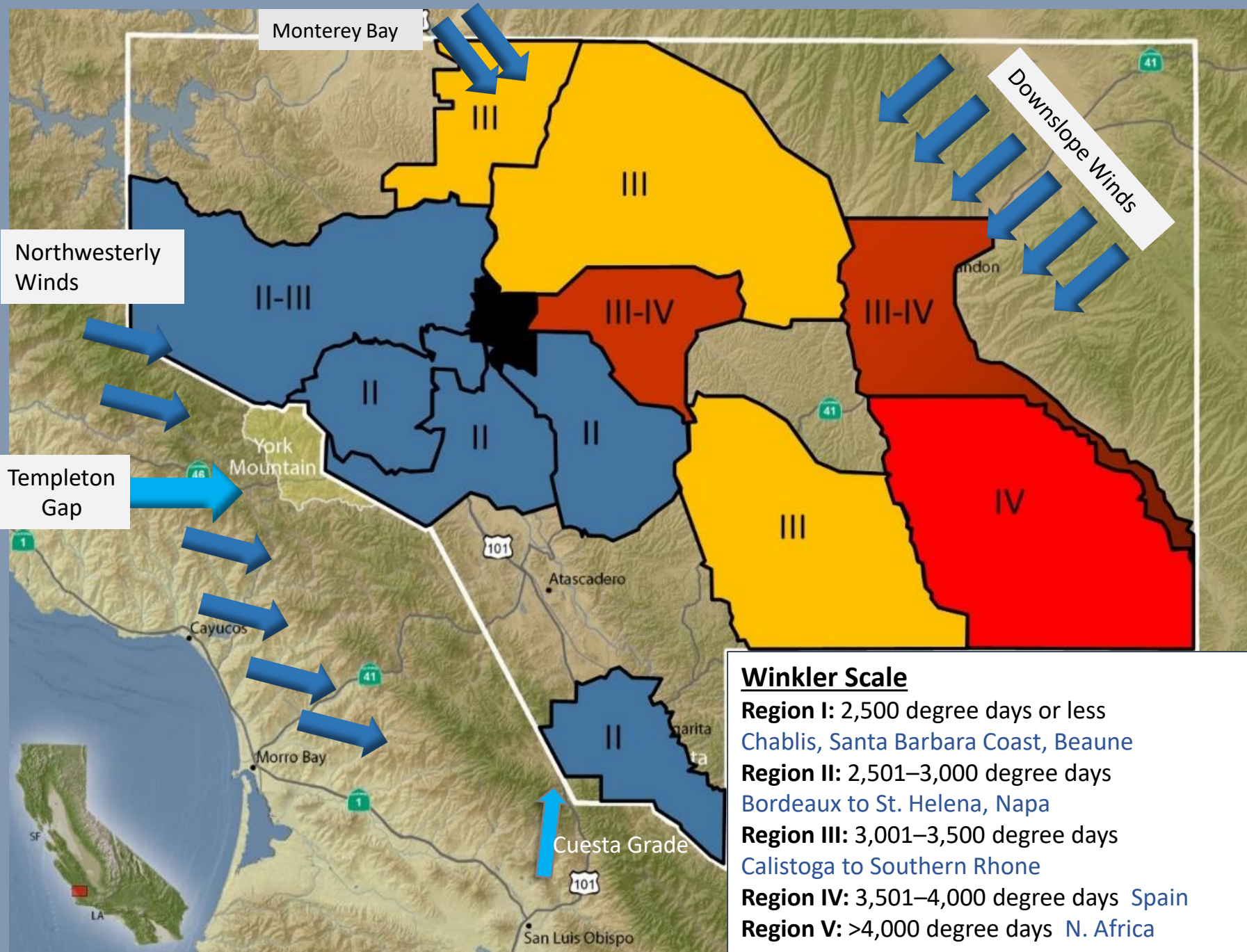
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO  
Image IBCAO  
Image Landsat / Copernicus

Google Earth



**Regional  
Average Diurnal Temps  
35° -50 ° F**

Based on data for Aug. Sep. and Oct. 2012 – 2015



**Winkler Scale**

**Region I:** 2,500 degree days or less  
Chablis, Santa Barbara Coast, Beaune

**Region II:** 2,501–3,000 degree days  
Bordeaux to St. Helena, Napa

**Region III:** 3,001–3,500 degree days  
Calistoga to Southern Rhone

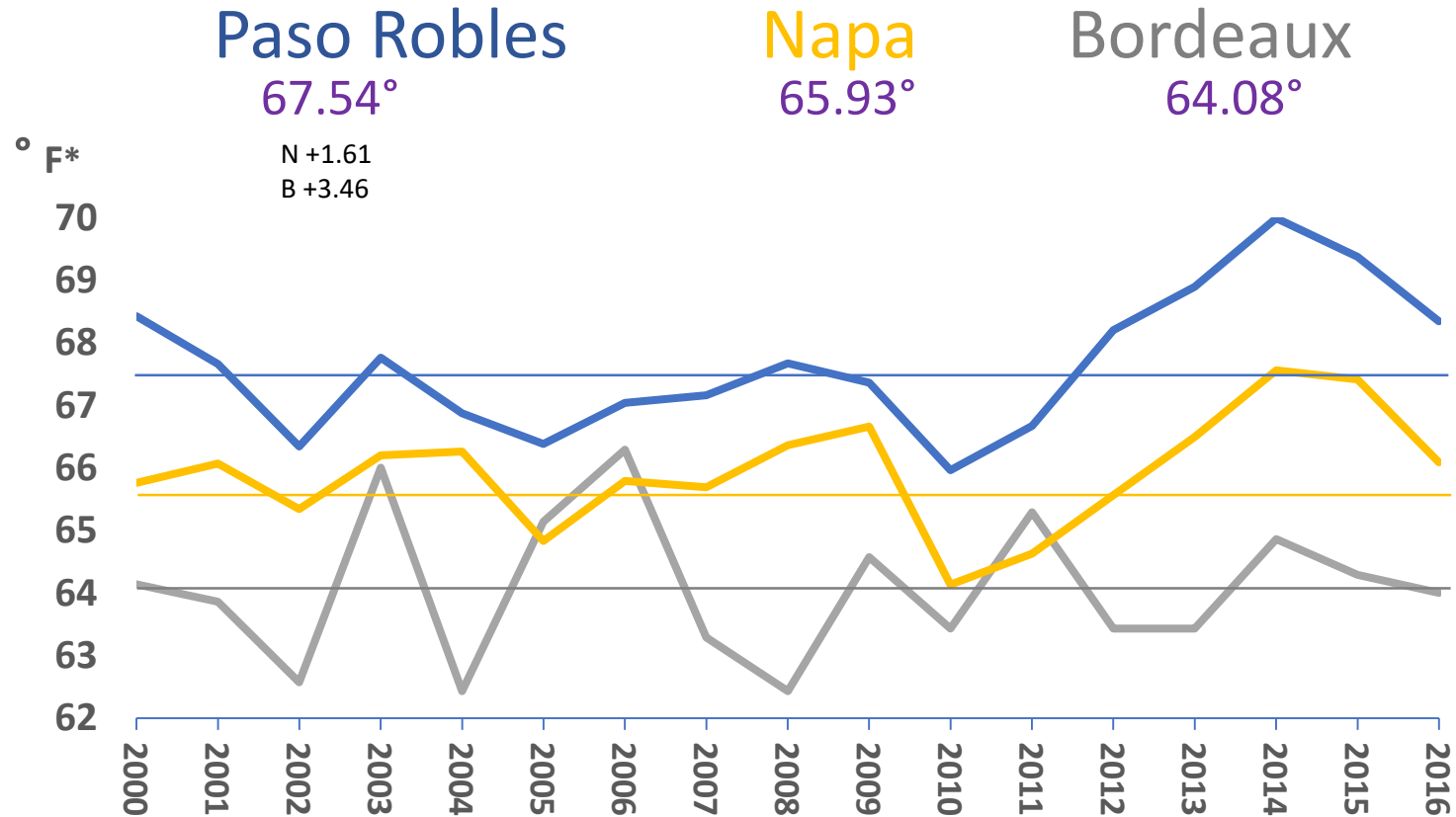
**Region IV:** 3,501–4,000 degree days Spain

**Region V:** >4,000 degree days N. Africa



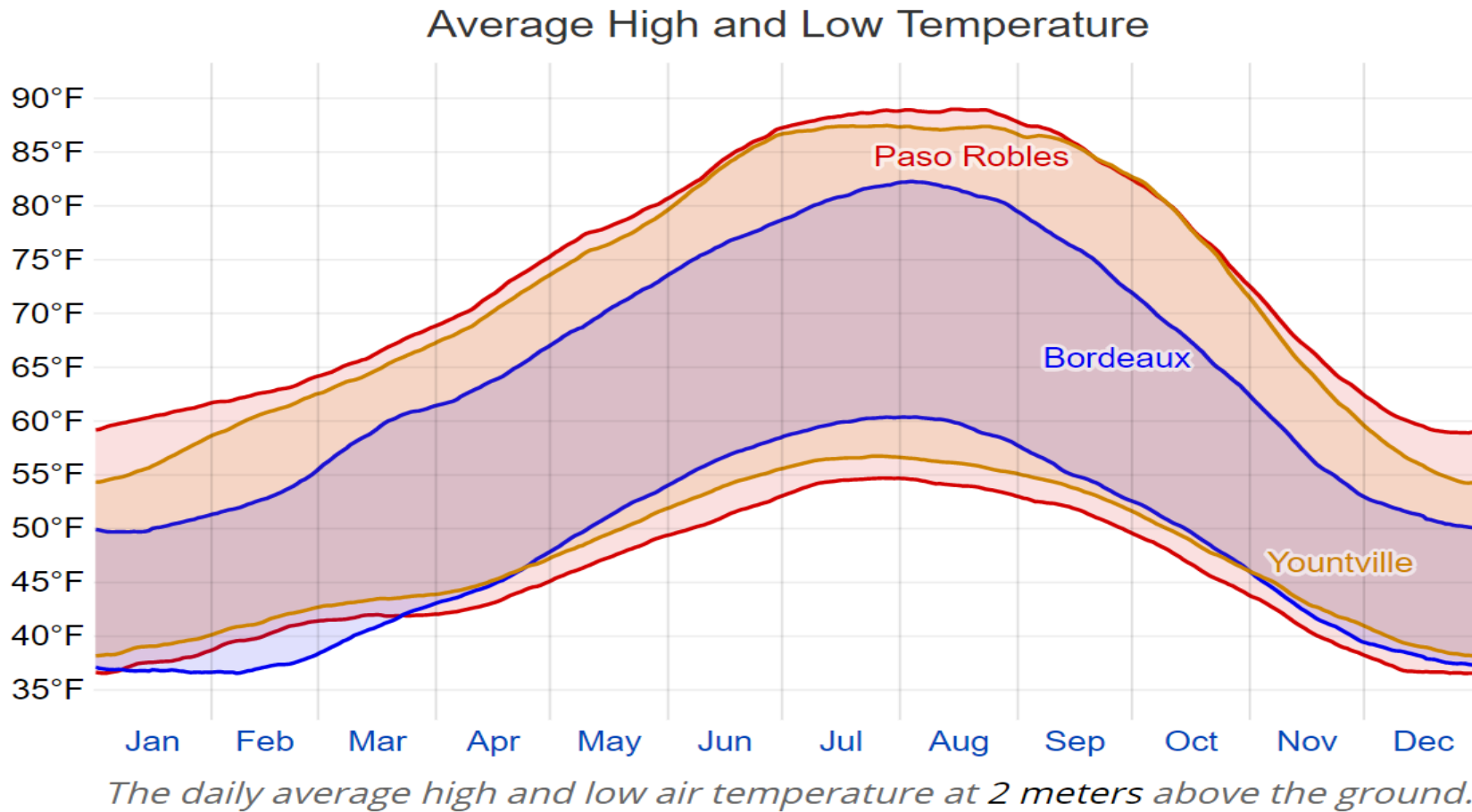
# Average Vintage Temperature

17 Year Average Temperatures



Based on average temperature each month during growing season (April 1 – October 31)  
\*Data from Paso Robles Airport, Napa VA Hosp. and Bordeaux Merignac weather stations

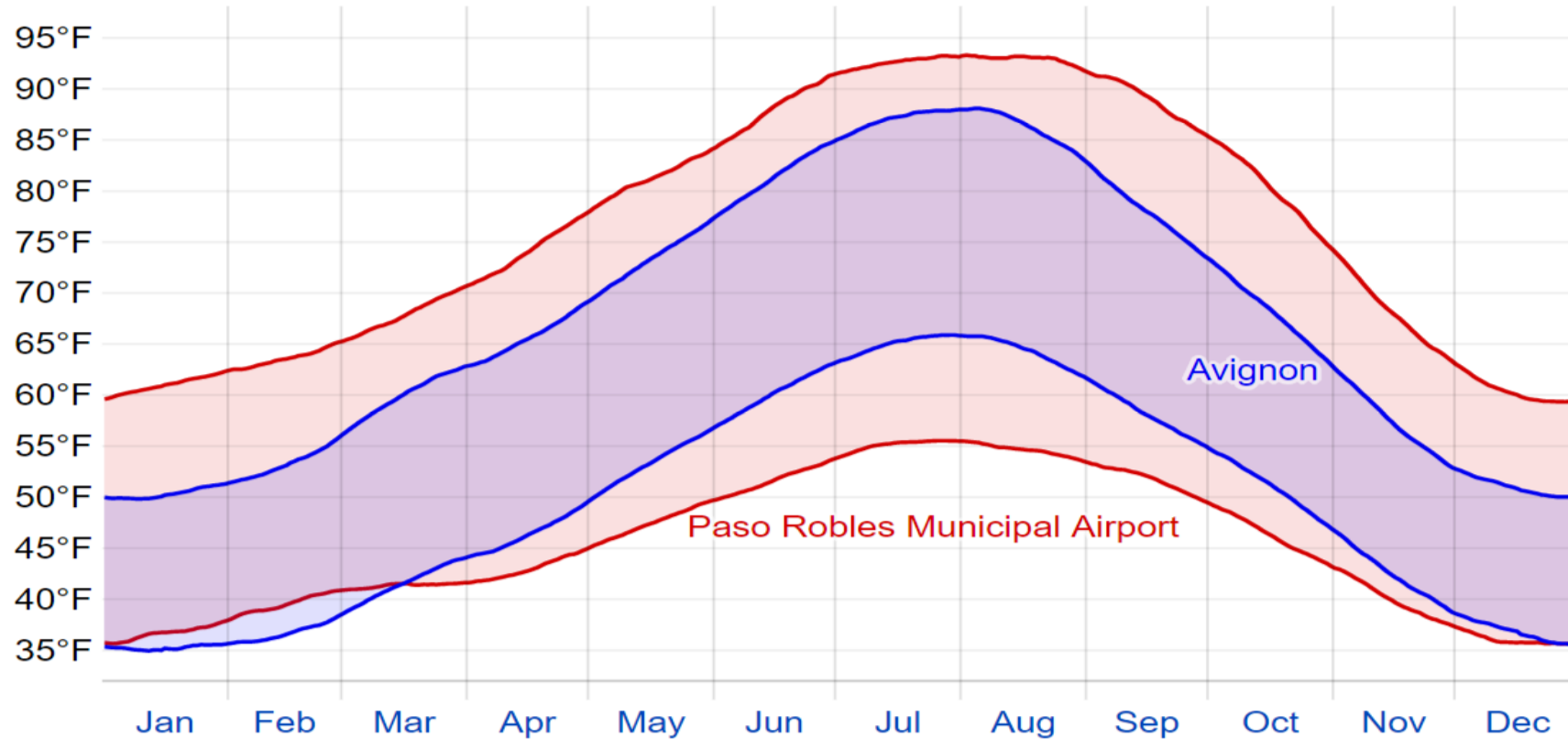
# Wide Diurnal Temperature Variance- Paso Robles, Yountville (Napa), Bordeaux



**Diurnal swings lower average temperature and help to retain natural acidity**

# Wide Diurnal Temperature Variance- Paso Robles, Avignon

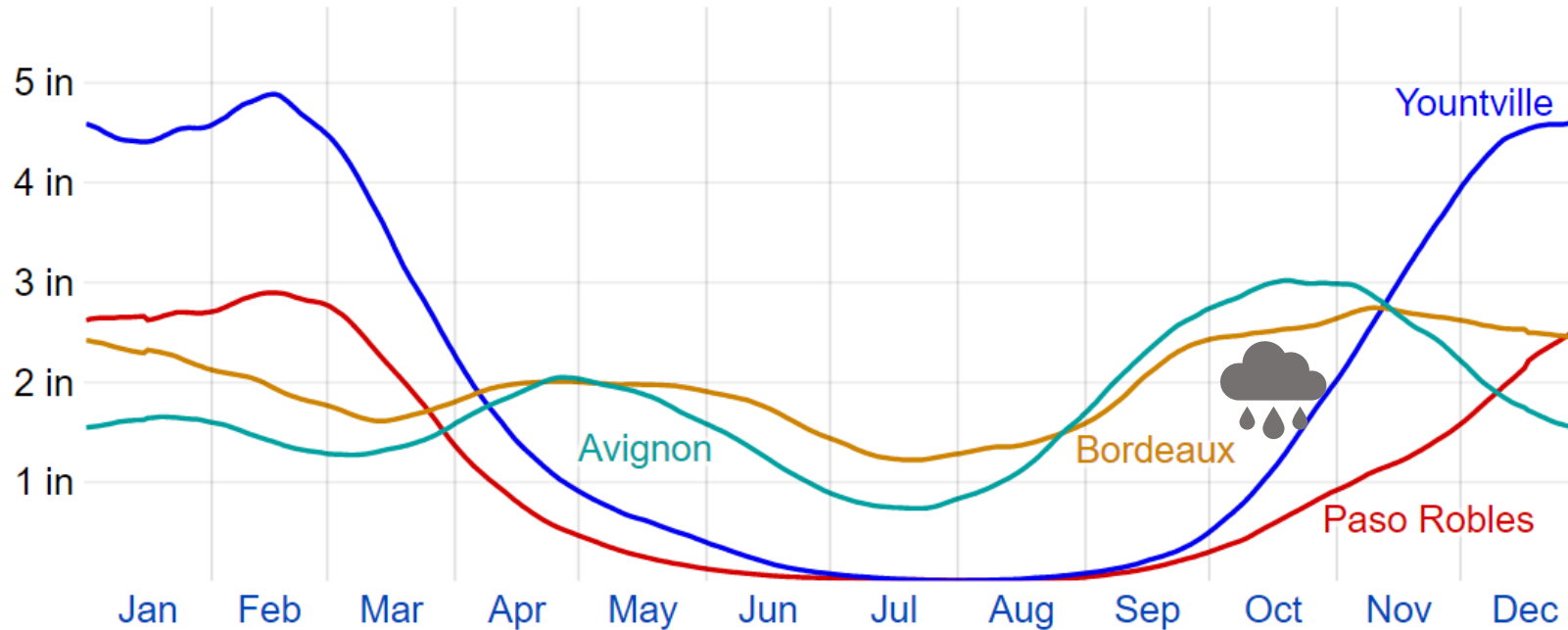
Average High and Low Temperature



*The daily average high and low air temperature at 2 meters above the ground.*

# Precipitation

Paso Robles, Yountville, Bordeaux, Avignon  
Average Monthly Rainfall



- Later rains and higher natural acidity allows us to be patient
- Tannins are more mature (rounded) at harvest
- Wines are more accessible on release, but still cellarable

# Modern Harvest Considerations

**1. Maturity (physiological ripeness) = Fullness of flavor, smoother tannins & deeper color**

- a) Amount of daylight - **Direct relationship** ↑↑
- b) Length of time on vine
- c) Temperature

**2. Acidity = Freshness**

- a) Temperature – **Inverse relationship** ↑↓
- b) Length of time on the vine

**3. Ripeness = Sugar = Alcohol**

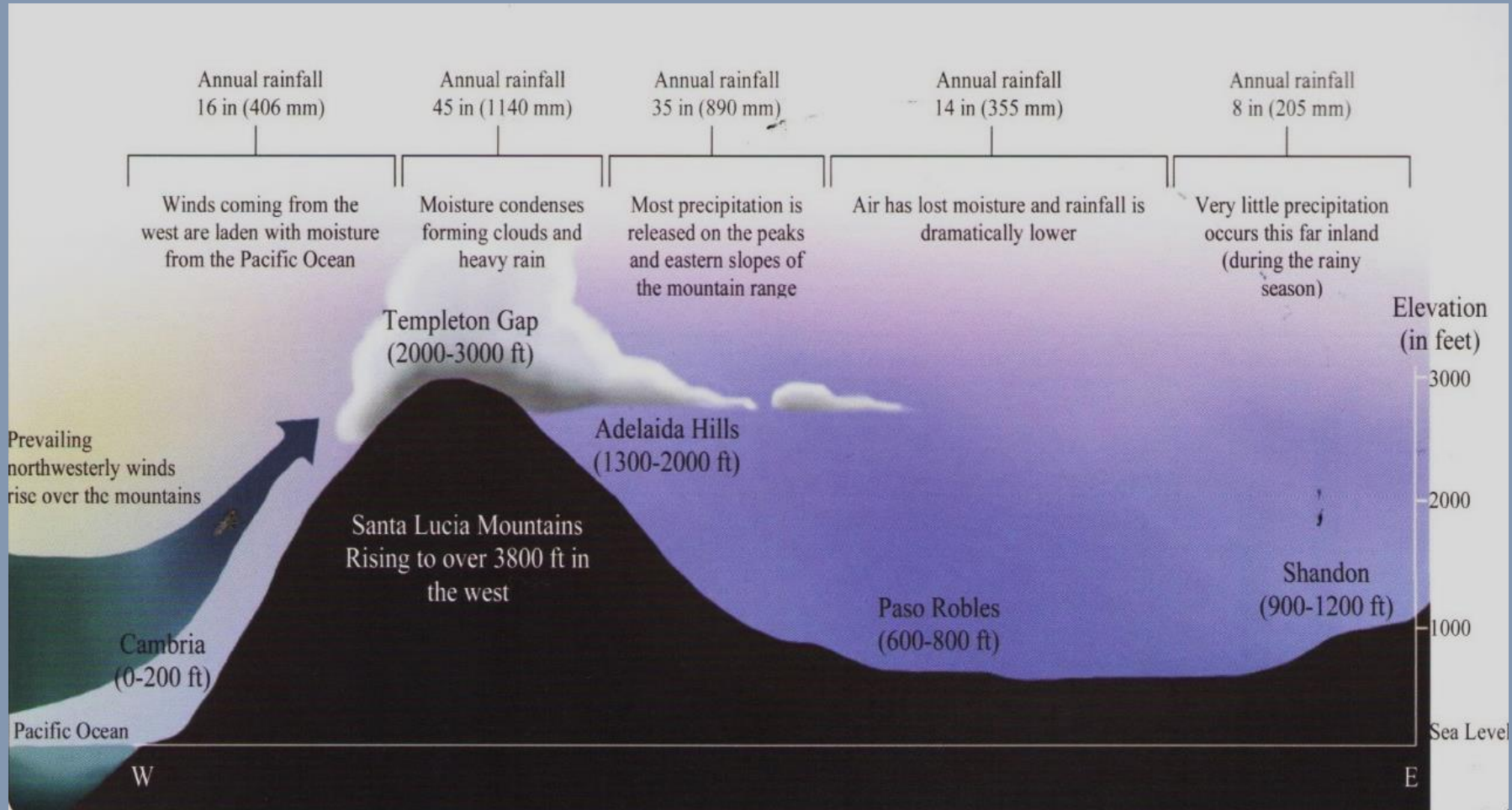
- a) Temperature - **Direct relationship** ↑↑
- b) Amount of daylight
- c) Length of time on vine

# Giornata – 2018 Nebbiolo

- 100% Nebbiolo – Luna Matta Vineyard, Adelaida District AVA
  - 1,600 ft
  - Silty clay loam over calcareous substrate
- Certified Organic, CCOF
- Native yeast fermentation,
- 24 months in 100% neutral French oak puncheons
- 14% abv
- 120 cases produced
- \$50
- Winemaker: Brian Terrizzi

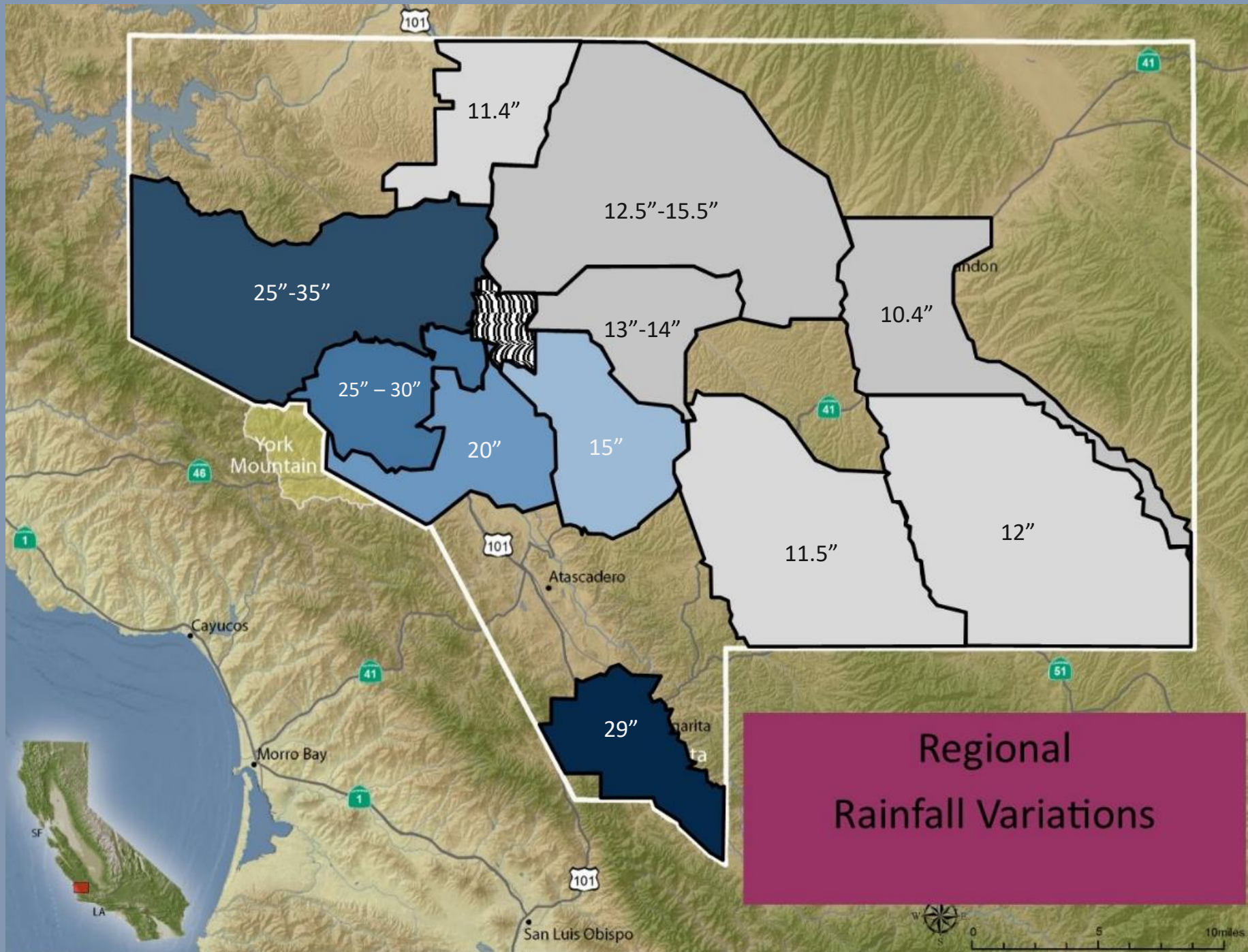


# Marine Influence- Precipitation

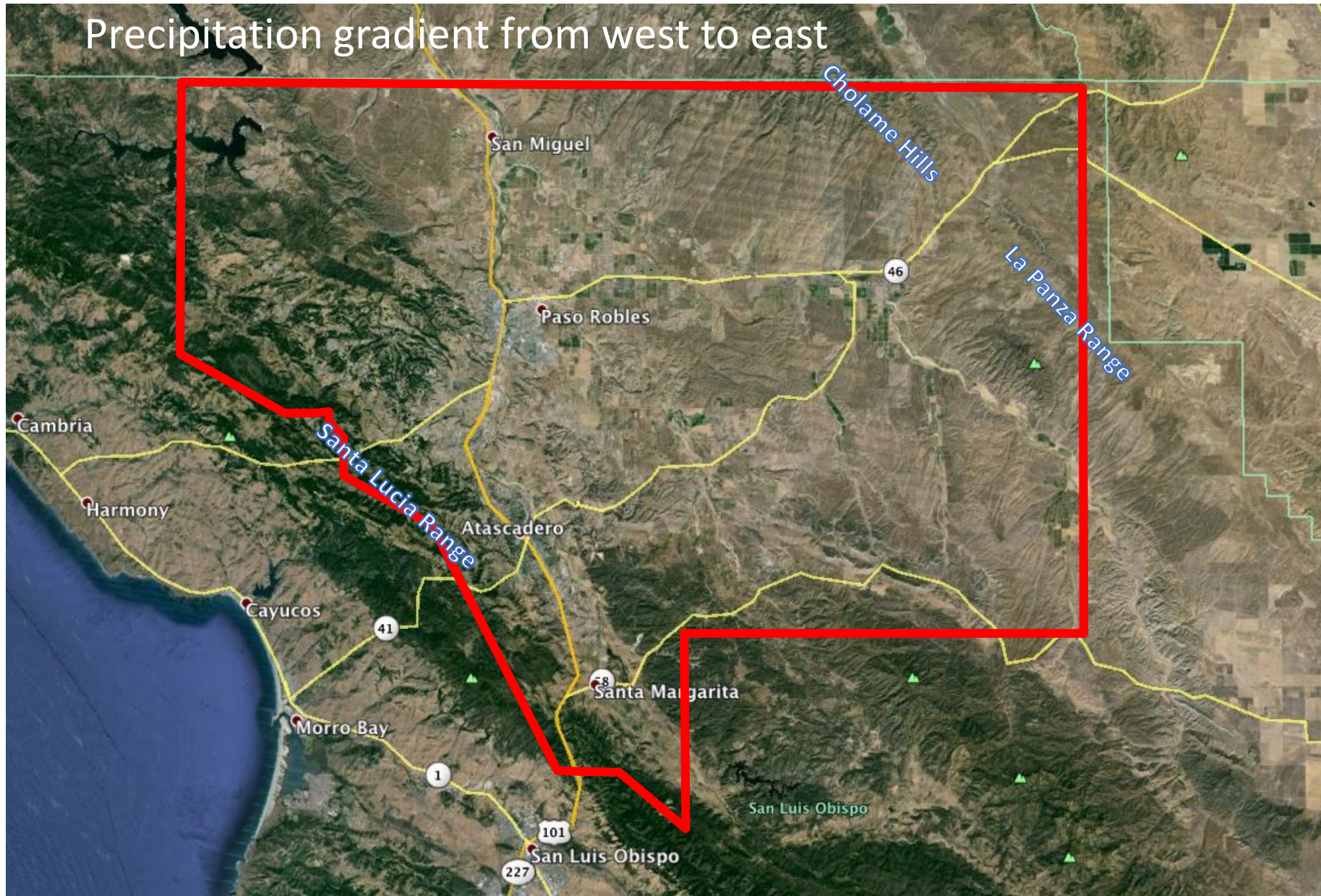








# Precipitation gradient from west to east

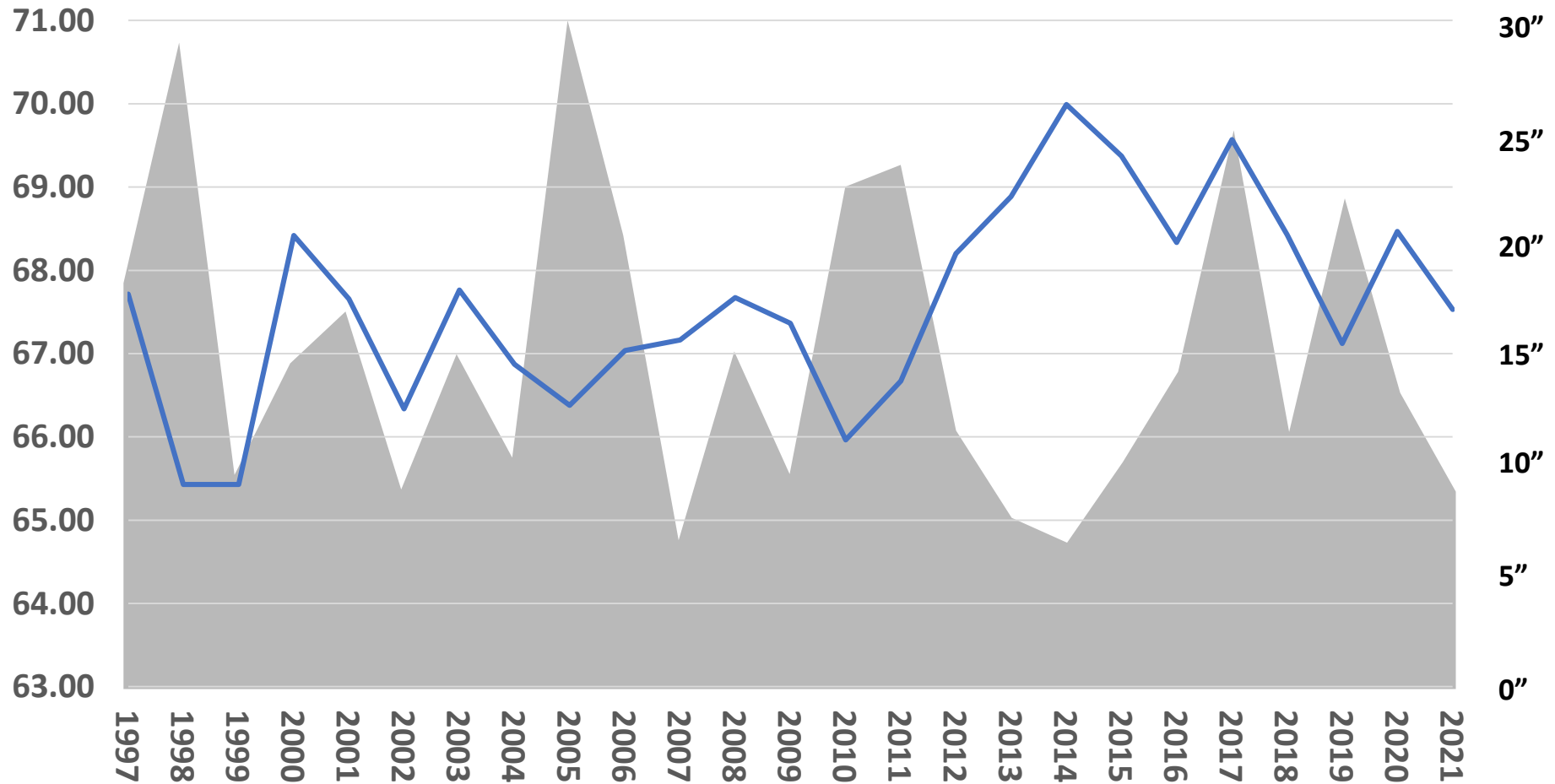


# 1997 – 2021

## Paso Robles Annual Avg. Temp/Rainfall

67.59 Average Annual Temp

14.26 Average Annual Precip.

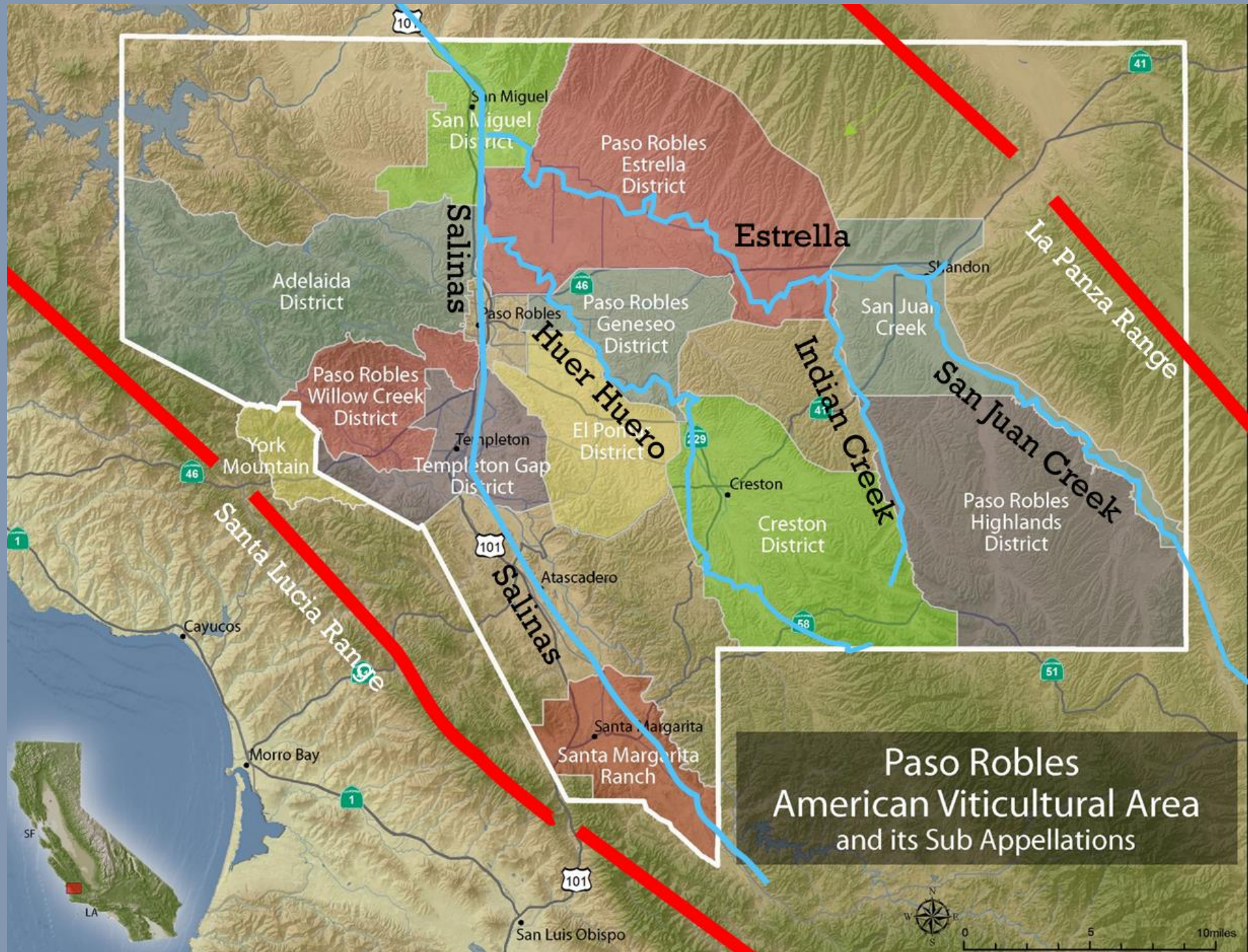


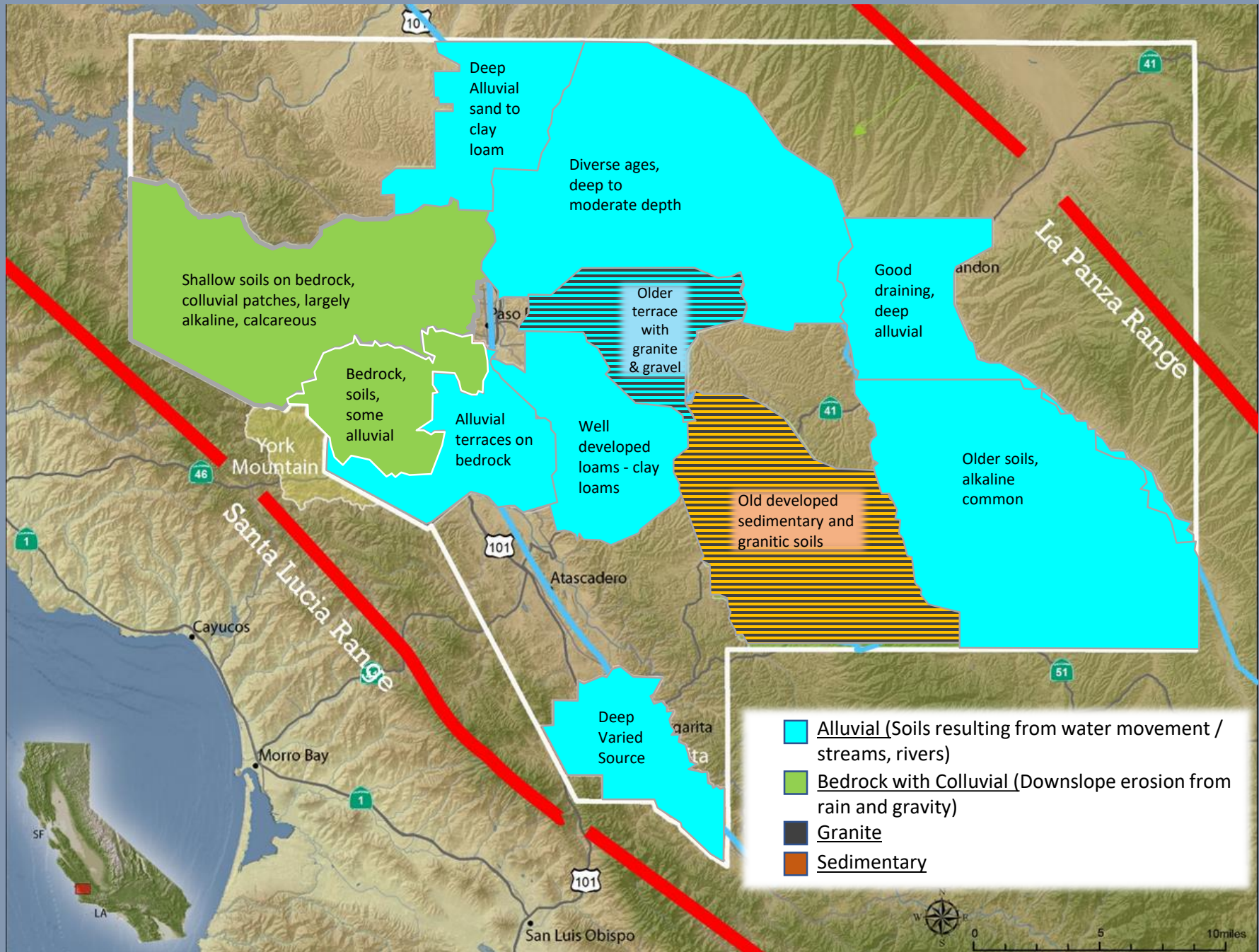
Based on average temperature each month during growing season (April 1 – October 31) \*Data from Paso Robles Airport weather station  
Precip. data from San Luis Obispo County Public Works Volunteer Precipitation Gauge Station MONTHLY PRECIPITATION REPORT Average Precipitation for Paso Robles 1887-2018 = 14.91"

# Tablas Creek Vineyard 2017 Esprit de Tablas

- 40% mourvedre, 20% grenache, 35% syrah, 5% counoise
- Native yeast in 1,500 gallon wooden upright fermenters, open top tanks and closed stainless fermenters
- Blended in May 2018 and aged in 1,200 gallon French oak foudres for one year
- Bottled in July 2019
- 14.5% abv
- 4K cases produced
- \$60 msrp on release
- Winemaker: Neil Collins















## Specific Regional Soil characteristics

- Soils in the west contain more organic matter due to higher rainfall
- Soils in the middle areas are more alluvial with predominant sand and clay content
- Eastern soils are deep alluvial soils with good drainage

# 2018 ISOSCELES Reserve

- 62% cabernet sauvignon, 16% cabernet franc, 13% merlot, 6% malbec, 3% petit verdot
- Paso Robles AVA
- Winemaking Notes:
  - Fermented in open top stainless steel fermenters and closed top tanks using UVU 43 yeast
  - 26 months in 100% new French oak 225l barrels
- pH 3.63 TA 6.5
- Bottled Nov. 2020, released Nov. 2021
- 15.5% abv
- Winemaker: Scott Shirley
- MSRP \$115



# Summary

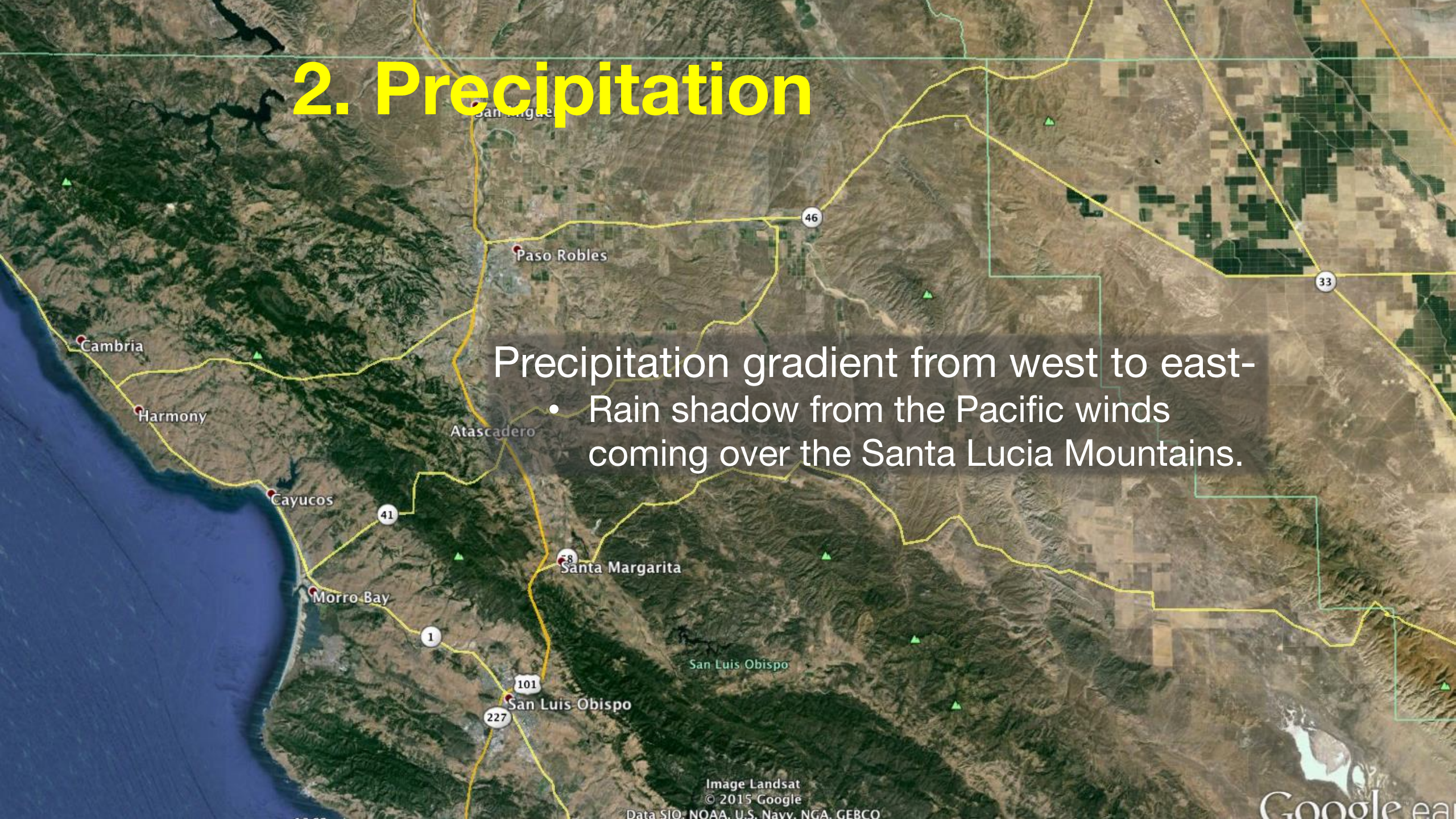
## 1. Cooling Influences

- Ocean to the West-
  - predominant NW winds
  - Templeton Gap
- Salinas Valley to the North
- Eastern Ranges
  - downslope winds
- Mitigates heat and influences diurnal temperature swings
  - Retains fresh, natural acidity in fruit
- Little to no fog during growing season
  - Added direct sunlight assures maturity (physiological ripeness) for late ripening varieties

# 2. Precipitation

Precipitation gradient from west to east-

- Rain shadow from the Pacific winds coming over the Santa Lucia Mountains.



### 3. General Soil Character of Paso Robles

- Calcareous soils from uplifted ocean floor
- Alkaline, often exceeding pH of 8
- Alkaline soils can promote acidity retention in fruit\*
- Variable clay content
  - Subsoil clays retain winter moisture

\*The Stock Market: The Function & Future of Rootstocks – Kelli White - GuildSomm -Sept. 2019

# Paso Typicality:

- Warm climate = **full fruit character**
- Long growing season w/ little to no fog = **Full maturity with late ripening varieties** =
  - Balanced pyrazine profile in cab and other Bordeaux varieties
  - Mature tannin profile at harvest
- Wide diurnal swings = **increased natural acidity at harvest**
- Mainly calcareous soils = **generous structure with balanced acidity** when compared to volcanic soils

## Paso Typicality:

Full bodied wines balanced with fresh acidity and softer tannins making them easier to drink on release, but with structure to be cellarable.

# Paso Robles: Trending toward diversity

## Multi-dimensional Region:

- Grape varieties - Results are very encouraging
  - Zin, cab, syrah, grenache, mourvèdre, viognier, tempranillo, aglianico...
- Large AVA with 11 Conjunctive Sub Regions -
  - Based on distinct regional terrain, climate, soils Variety of meso-climates, soils, terrain
  - Each sub-region has its own version of the general regional character

*A region's typicity, and eventually its terroir, is revealed in an evolution guided by nature, over generations.*



# Paso Robles – Indications

- **Market Acceptance:** The area's reputation has been established with a number of distinctive, highly acclaimed wines in the market with more appearing each vintage.
- **Diversity:** No one specific style has dominated, underscoring the region's diverse possibilities.
- **Emerging Specialties:** Reasonable to say that some specialization will appear in time as "best methods" are identified and embraced for the conditions in each sub-AVA.





# Questions?

Many thanks to the wineries who generously donated their wines for this presentation:

Barton Family Wines

Thacher Winery and Vineyards

Tablas Creek Vineyard

Clos Solene

Giornata Winery

JUSTIN Vineyards & Winery

Also to:



[pasowine.com](http://pasowine.com)  
[pasoroblescab.com](http://pasoroblescab.com)

