

# THE AMERICAS

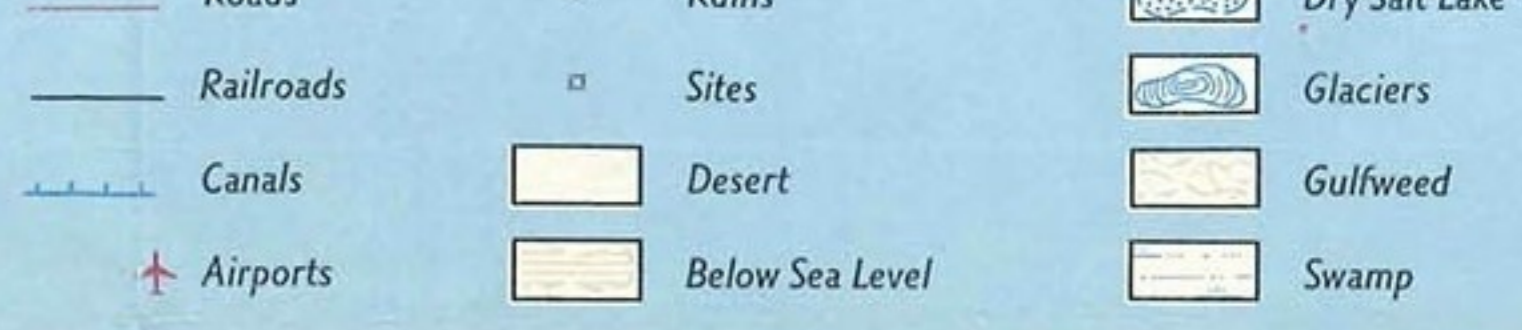
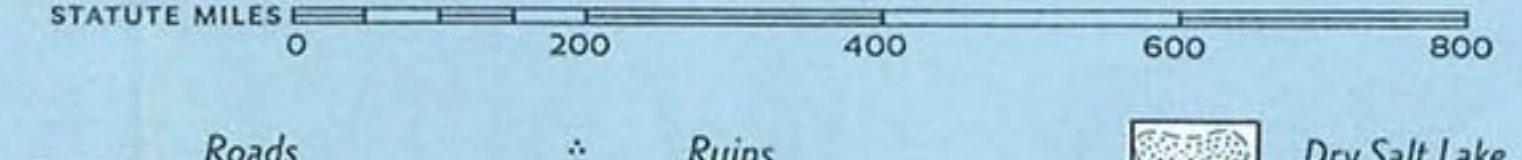
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Bipolar Oblique Conic Conformal Projection

SCALE 1:200,000,000

1 CENTIMETER = 200 KILOMETERS OR 1 INCH = 316 MILES



Elevations, Depth Curves, and Soundings in Meters  
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**NORTH AMERICA** offers everything from an ice cap to orchids within its 9,390,000 square miles. The Rocky Mountains march through the western third of the continent. Peaks give way to plains; then the land rises again in the forested folds of the Appalachian range in the east. Ancient rock of the Canadian Shield arcs around Hudson Bay in a two-million-square-mile sweep. The Great Lakes—results of the last ice age—rank among the world's largest bodies of fresh water. Climate ranges from arctic cold and snow to the preeminent warmth of tropical Caribbean islands. Lichens and low shrubs mark the northern tundra; timberland, deciduous forests, and prairie grasses typify the midsection; sparse desert growth struggles in the arid southwest; emerald jungle takes hold in the hot, humid lands linking the continents.

**THREE-FOURTHS** of South America's 6,795,000 square miles lie in the tropics. Dominating this region is the Amazon, mainstem of the greatest of all river systems; within its two-million-square-mile drainage basin spreads the largest tropical rain forest on earth. In contrast, the Atacama Desert of Chile is the world's driest spot and bleak Tierra del Fuego one of the most windwept. Along South America's western edge rises the 4,500-mile-long Andes, longest mountain chain on any continent. Beef herds graze Argentina's grassy pampas. Plantations in the Brazilian highlands produce world-famous coffee. Though lacking many large lakes, the continent has a number of impressive waterfalls, including Angel Falls, the highest known.