

# A Lake No More

Before diversions began, Owens Lake covered over 100 square miles of the Owens Valley floor. Steamships had once plied its water carrying silver bullion from Cerro Gordo across the lake for transport to Los Angeles.

But by 1926, just 13 years after Los Angeles diverted Owens Valley waters into their aqueduct, the lake was dry. No longer would the image of the Sierra Nevada mountains be reflected in its water.



Dust Storm Coming off of Owens Dry Lake Bed

The dry lake bed contained numerous chemicals that had been deposited into the Lake for the previous tens of thousands of years. When strong winds would blow, huge dust clouds would blow off the dry lake, often limiting visibility down to just a few miles.

Today Los Angeles shallowly covers about 27 square miles of the lake with water and an additional 3.5 square miles with vegetation to control some of the dust.