

ESTUARY ISLANDS and the town of Oakley, Calif., at right, on Big Break, a small bay in the San Joaquin River.

DELTA TUNNEL VISIONS

The \$16-billion project is a key component of Newsom's strategy to offset a hotter, drier California. Opponents say it will be an ecological disaster.

> By Hayley Smith and Ian James REPORTING FROM HOOD, CALIF

In the heart of California, at the place where two great rivers converge beneath the tule fog, lies the linchpin of one of the largest water supply systems in the world.

Here in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, birds soar the Pacific Flyway, cows graze beside sodden rice fields, and red reeds poke from still depths. In winter and spring, when the snow melts and the rain pours, water rushes through its sloughs and streams, winding around more than 200 small islands on a path to the Golden Gate and, eventually, the Pacific Ocean.

This 1,100-square-mile estuary drains a vast watershed, bringing together about half of all river flows in the state and contributing to the



A SIGN OF OPPOSITION to the Delta Conveyance Project along a levee road near the Sacramento River.

supplies of two out of every three Californians.

But the idyllic marsh is also the site of a bitter, decades-long battle over a proposal known as the Delta Conveyance Project — a tunnel that would run beneath the delta to move more water from Northern California to thirsty cities to the

State officials say the tunnel is a critical piece of infrastructure that would help protect millions of Cali $for nians \, from \, losing \, water \, supplies \,$ in the event of a major earthquake or levee break. They say the project would also enable more water to be captured in wet years, girding the system against increasingly erratic and unpredictable weather made

[See Tunnel, A12] Biggest donors in U.S. Senate race

Unions, Native Americans, crypto billionaires and Hollywood exert key influence. CALIFORNIA, B1

SCHIFF'S

MAY END

PORTER'S

BATTLE

Burbank Democrat's focus on Garvey to avoid facing her

appears to be working.

Rep. Katie Porter, famed among Democrats grilling powerful corporate barons and right-wing ideo-

logues testifying before Congress, faces a serious risk of falling short in Tuesday's

California primary election, which would bring an end to her bid to win the late Dianne Feinstein's Senate seat in the fall general election.

Along with a once-formidable campaign account de-

pleted by her tough 2022 reelection bid and expected low voter turnout, the Irvine

congresswoman must overcome the millions of dollars

Democratic rival Rep. Adam B. Schiff of Burbank and his

allies have spent boosting

GOP candidate Steve Garvey, the former Dodgers All-

If Garvey and Schiff win

the top two spots in Califor-

nia's open primary, the two

would be the only candi-

dates to advance to the No-

vember general election with Schiff being the heavy

favorite because of Califor-

nia's strong Democratic tilt.

Political experts say Schiff's

strategy to prop up Garvey largely driven by the [See **Senate race**, A22]

Star first baseman.

Ву Ѕеема Мента

TACTIC

Fake nude images highlight gaps in law

By Jon Healey

If an eighth-grader in California shared a nude photo of a classmate with friends without consent, the student could conceivably be prosecuted under state laws dealing with child pornography and disorderly

conduct. If the photo is an AI-generated deepfake, however, it's not clear that any state law would apply.

That's the dilemma facing the Beverly Hills Police Department as it investigates a group of students from Beverly Vista Middle School who allegedly shared photos of classmates that had been doctored with an artificial-intelligence-powered app. According to the district, the images used real faces of students atop AIgenerated nude bodies.

Lt. Andrew Myers, a spokesman for the Beverly Hills police, said no arrests have been made and the investigation is continuing.

Beverly Hills Unified District [See Deepfakes, A22]

Japan's outlying islands on edge

By Stephanie Yang

ISHIGAKI, Japan — At the first blare of air raid sirens, the people milling about in a grassy park barely stirred. Five-year-old Tae Sano clung to her mother's hand.

Some of the people around her, all wearing bright-yellow bibs, took a few uncertain steps. But the only real urgency came from a man in a blue uniform, jogging through the confused crowd

"One more time," he called out through a megaphone.

When the sirens wailed anew, a voice rang through the park: "A missile was just launched. Please evacuate immediately."

This time, people moved. Ayako Sano led her three [See Japan, A4]

Who are the people shaping our culture? In her column, Amy Kaufman examines the lives of icons, underdogs and rising stars to find out — "For Real."

In the wake of 'Scandoval,' Ariana Madix is living her Broadway dream

REPORTING FROM NEW YORK t the end of the musical "Chicago," Roxie Hart, a chorus girl who has been charged with murdering her lover, is declared not guilty. It should be a victorious moment for the aspiring vaudeville star, but just as the verdict is announced, the press gets wind of another bloody crime unfolding down the courthouse hall. The media scrambles out of the room to cover the juicy new story, leaving a dejected Roxie behind.

"Wait! I'm Roxie Hart! Don't you want my picture?" she yells after them, alone with just her lawyer. "Where are all the reporters? Photographers? The publicity?"

Watching Ariana Madix deliver these lines on a Broadway stage feels particularly poignant, given the tabloid scandal she's lived through.

It has now been one year since Madix learned that her longtime boyfriend was cheating on her with a close friend. The revelation — like much of her nine-year rela $tionship with \, her \, ex, Tom \, Sandoval \, - \, played \, out \, on \, the \,$ reality show "Vanderpump Rules," where the two began dating while working as bartenders at a West Hollywood restaurant.

Madix was one of the less sensational members of the cast, a go-along-to-get-along type without the pick-me energy that dominated the group. Cameras followed her castmates as they got arrested, were booted from work for public intoxication, tried to become pop stars and got engaged to much older movie [See Ariana Madix, A14]



THE TYLER TWINS

Israelis 'more or less'

It's now up to Hamas to agree to it, the U.S. says. In Gaza, American airdrops begin. world, A3

Blizzard closes roads to Lake Tahoe, Mammoth

pounds Sierra Nevada with gusts of up to 190 mph. california, B3

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Season's strongest snowstorm

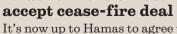
blockbuster movie, yet an activist investor is circling. BUSINESS, A16

Despite 'Barbie' success,

Mattel faces challenges

Toymaker should be soaring after







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