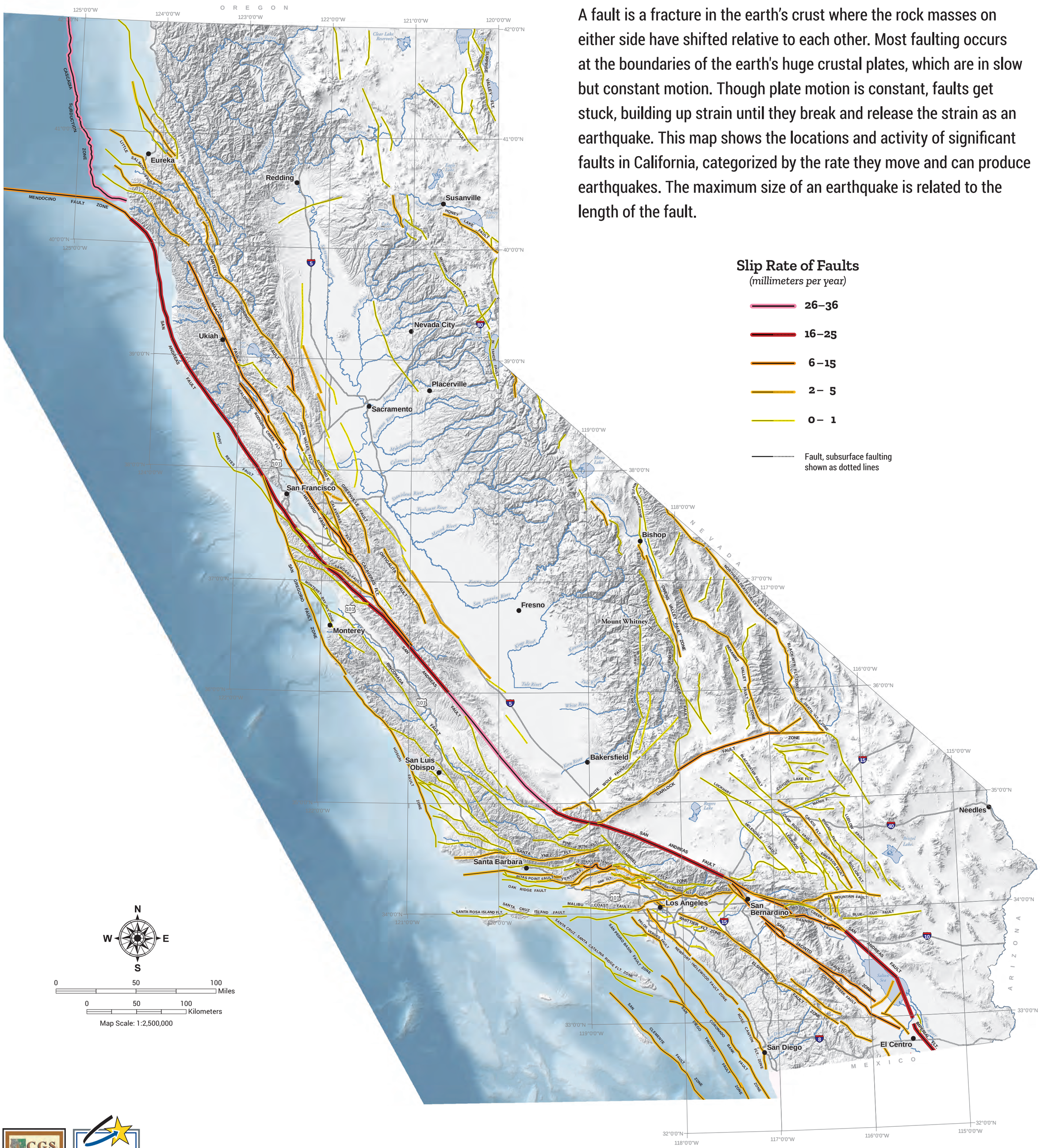
Faulting in California

A fault is a fracture in the earth's crust where the rock masses on either side have shifted relative to each other. Most faulting occurs at the boundaries of the earth's huge crustal plates, which are in slow but constant motion. Though plate motion is constant, faults get stuck, building up strain until they break and release the strain as an earthquake. This map shows the locations and activity of significant faults in California, categorized by the rate they move and can produce earthquakes. The maximum size of an earthquake is related to the length of the fault.



Copyright © 2018 by the California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written consent of the California Geological Survey.

"The California Department of Conservation makes no warranties as to the suitability of this product for any particular purpose."

www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs

Base Map Sources: U.S. Geological Survey, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Transportation