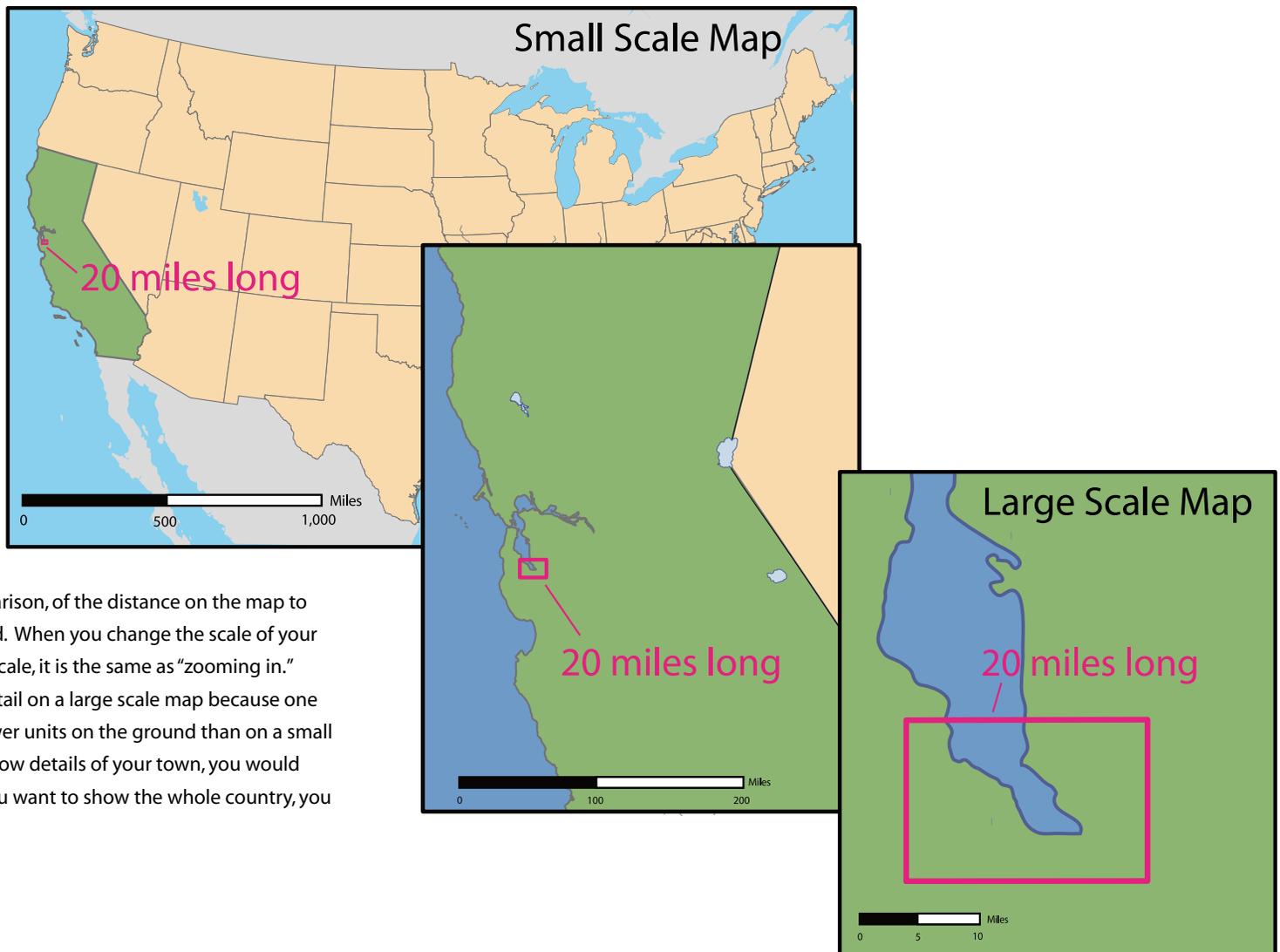


Map Scale



Map scale is the ratio, or comparison, of the distance on the map to the real distance on the ground. When you change the scale of your map from small scale to large scale, it is the same as “zooming in.” Mapmakers can show more detail on a large scale map because one unit on the map represents fewer units on the ground than on a small scale map. So if you want to show details of your town, you would use a large scale map. But if you want to show the whole country, you would use a small scale map.

Using Scale Bars

Ways to Represent Scale
<p>Graphic Scale</p> <p>You can use the scale bar to measure distances on the map.</p>
<p>Verbal Scale</p> <p>1 centimeter equals 1,000 meters</p> <p>You can use a ruler to measure distances on the map and then multiply the distance by 1,000 to find out the distance on the ground.</p>
<p>Representative Fraction</p> <p>1:100,000</p> <p>This ratio tells you that one unit (inch, centimeter, meter, etc.) on the map is equal to 100,000 of the same units on the ground. So if you found a distance of 5 centimeters on the map, you would know that it is equal to 500,000 centimeters on the ground.</p>

Using the map scale to measure from San Francisco, CA to Denver, CO:

1. Put a piece of paper on the map to connect San Francisco and Denver
2. Draw marks on the paper where the dots are
3. Place the paper under the map scale and determine how many miles it is from San Francisco to Denver

