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Photography of Clouds Report

The purpose of this assignment was to observe and photograph an image of a cloud that has formed in the sky due to atmospheric instability. The scientific goal was to photograph a cloud and find the atmospheric phenomena that created the cloud. My personal goal was to document a cloud formation over a body of water, especially since large bodies of water are hard to find in dry Colorado.

My image was taken June 7th, 2005 at 8:25 in the evening. I took this picture in Greeley, Colorado at a local lake. I was facing north and took only one picture. I was unable to try different exposure levels. The temperature was approximately 62° Fahrenheit with a dew point of 39 °F and an average humidity of 41. The wind speed was 4 mph and the visibility was 20 miles.

I used a six mega pixel Nikon Coolpix 5600 digital camera without the flash. I used the auto setting on my camera for landscape photography. More specifically, the aperture was set at 5.2 and the shutter speed was taken at 1/305s. The focal length was 7mm.

The clouds in the picture are nimbus clouds and they are nimbostratus. Nimbostratus clouds are low, gray and flat. The clouds are at a maximum height of 6,500 feet. Nimbostratus clouds are associated with precipitation and thunder storms and forms

when warm humid air is lifted over a large area. Nimbus means rain and the word stratus means sheet, which makes sense when viewing the clouds as they are flat on the bottom.

Nimbostratus are composed of water droplets and sometimes snow, and due to the high

concentration of particles within the cloud, nimbostratus clouds often block

the sun. I had trouble reading the

Skew-T plot but it is on the left for

interpretation.

QuickTime?and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

I was somewhat satisfied with my image. I could have been at a better angle, however, nimbostratus clouds are hard to photograph due to their low level and large surface area.