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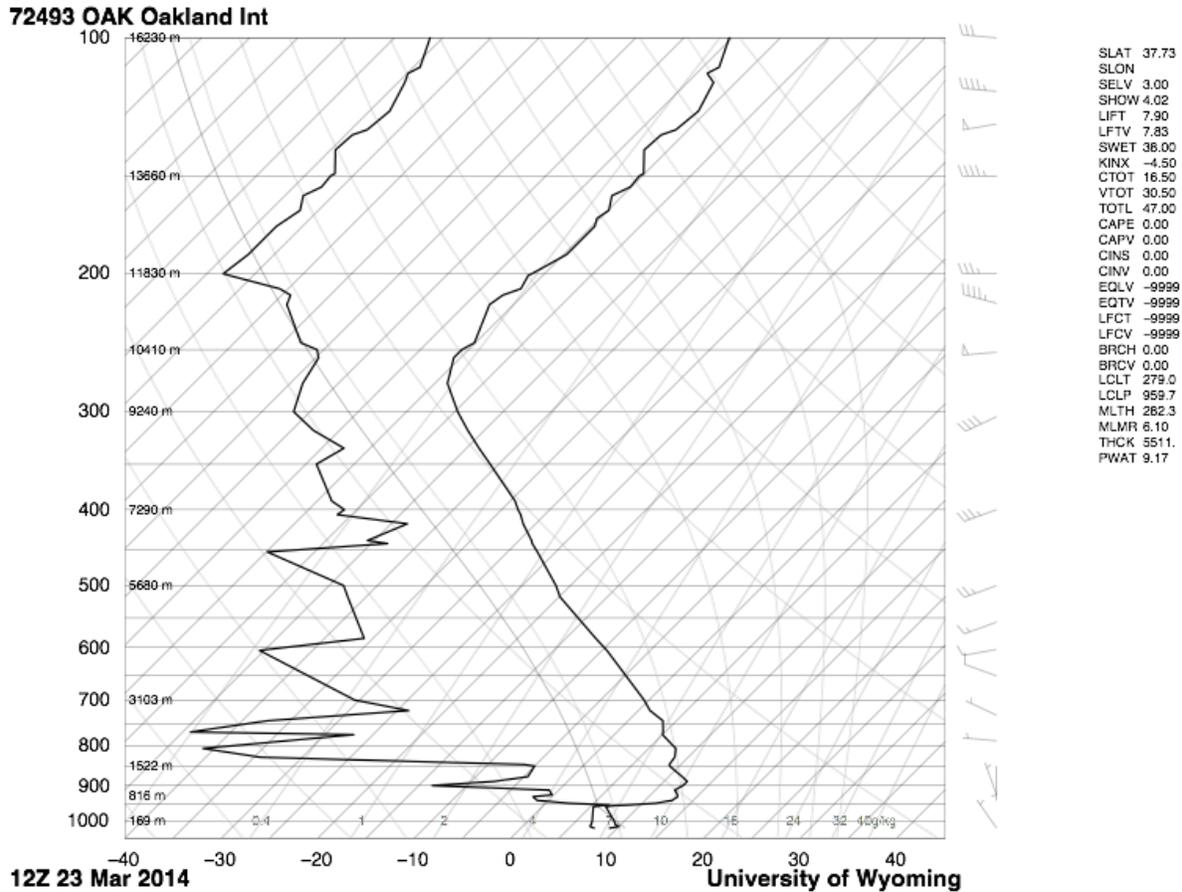
Flow Visualization 4200



Big Sur Sunset

This image was submitted for the second cloud assignment. Over spring break, I went on a trip to California with my dad and we drove on Highway 1 from San Francisco to Big Sur and back. There were many beautiful clouds on this trip so it was difficult to choose which image I would use for this assignment. This one was my favorite, partly because I was in such a wonderful mood watching this particular sunset. The smell of the sea, the intensity of the brewing storm, and my awareness of the Earth's rotation made this moment very profound.

This photo was taken March 23, 2014 in Big Sur, California at 7:05 PST. I was at sea level and facing West. I slightly elevated my camera from the horizon about 10°.



Most of the day was sunny with scattered clouds, about 67 °F, and there was a stable atmosphere that afternoon. When these clouds started rolling in, the rest of the sky appeared much darker as the sun was setting and its light was being diffused by the clouds. If you look closely to the bottom left of the left cloud, there is a rain storm in the distance. Shortly after this photo was taken, it began to rain where my dad and I were sitting on the beach. The winds began to increase speed as the sun set and were blowing about 20mph when it started to rain. I think these two clouds are cumulonimbus because of their height and the fact that they produced rain shortly after the photo was taken.

The photo was captured using my Canon 5d Mark ii with a 24-105mm telephoto lens. When I took the photo, the lens was at 24mm with a ~20,000 ft field of view while the lens was ~20,000 feet from the cloud. This images was taken with an Aperture 22, ISO 100, and shutter speed 1/125. The image size is 5447 X 3629 pixels. It is a High Dynamic Range (HDR) photo meaning three separate photos were taken; one at f -2, one at f 0, and one at f 2and then all three are merged. What this allows is for the information of the sky where it is brightest to be captured at a low exposure, the colors of the clouds to be captured at a normal exposure, and the details of the rocks and everything below the horizon to be captured at the high exposure. When all three are merged, you get stunning clarity and color information for the entire image.



This image reveals the light of the sun setting over the ocean with two large cumulonimbus clouds forming around each other. After merging the three separate images, I was very surprised with the colors and clarity of the picture. I think it comes about as close to capturing what I saw that I could achieve with my camera. Unfortunately, the photo alone pales in comparison to the moment itself, but that's not the point. I want to continue taking HDR photos because of the fascinating results they produce. I would also love to travel back to Big Sur and spend more time at these outdoor sanctuaries.