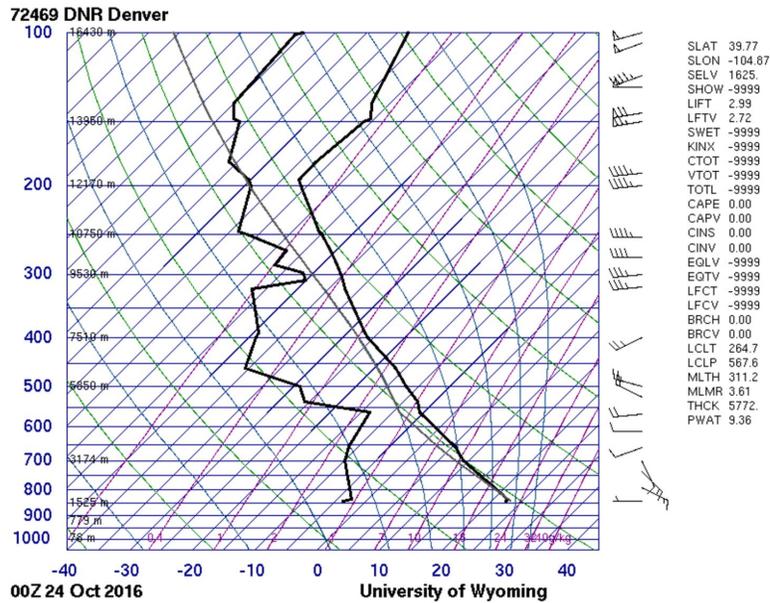


Marco Gardi - Clouds 2



I took this image for the clouds 2nd assignment on October 23rd 2016. I was on a bike to Brainard Lake in the Indian Peaks Wilderness. As I approached the lake this mountain range and the clouds above it came into sight and I had to stop and take a picture. The time was 4:49 PM and I was facing West. The clouds were slowly moving from West to East and formed a horizontally extending layer, however due to the angle that I was shooting from, in the image it appears the clouds extend vertically.

I've identified the main body of the clouds in the image as an altostratus because they occupied the majority of horizontal space in the sky at the time the image was taken. At the top of the frame it appears that the clouds are developing into altocumulus based on their rounded appearance. In the top-left corner of the image some wispy cirrus clouds are also visible. The skew-T diagram indicates that the atmosphere is stable due to a CAPE value of zero. The diagram also shows a cloud formation altitude of around 18,000 ft based on the LCLP. It's important to note that data from the Denver skew-T diagram may not accurately represent the clouds in this image because orographic effects must be taken into consideration in the Rocky Mountains.



I took my Clouds 2 image with a Nikon D3100 DSLR and a 35mm prime lens. I shot this image at 1/250, F11, ISO 100, producing a well resolved image in both space and time. I estimate that my distance from the mountain range was about 3-4 miles. One of the elements in the frame that particularly caught my interest was the S shaped perturbation in the cloud layer that seems to be originating over the peak of Mt. Toll, the sharpest peak in the range. To guide the viewer's eye towards the "S" I opted to increase the detail in the clouds by making the image black and white and increasing the contrast. In post processing, I used a selection tool to create two layers; one from the sky and clouds, one from the terrain. I then modified the two layers independently, which allowed me enhance the contrast in the sky while not losing all of the detail in the mountains to the shadows.