

Cloud Info:

10/25/2018, 2:12 PM

US 36 Scenic Overlook, Boulder

Context

I took this photo for the second cloud photography assignment in Flow Visualization. I was driving to the campus and noticed the big sea of clouds, so I decided to pull over at the scenic overlook. I just really liked the dispersion of relatively small clouds scattered across the whole sky, and thought that this was the clearest depiction of that that I was able to capture during the timeframe for this assignment.

Circumstances

As mentioned above, I took this photo at the US 36 Scenic Overlook. For those unfamiliar, it is atop a hill, right off the main highway into Boulder. It is a nice vantage point for the surrounding cities, and also offers a place to take pictures at the horizon level without large structures in the way. I took the picture spur of the moment, so the only camera I had available was my iPhone 7, 12 megapixel camera. It was angled probably only 40° above the horizon, facing south.

Clouds

There were several clouds in this image, but they all have roughly the same structure, indicating that they are all the same type of cloud. The Skew T for this day shows that the cape was 0, showing that the atmosphere was completely stable, and according to the ceilometer data from the Skywatch Observatory, the clouds seem to have formed at roughly 3 kilometers, leading me to believe that they are all stratocumulus. There were no other clouds in the sky at the time this picture was taken. Later this day, the sky became almost completely consumed by clouds, so a weather system may have been moving in.

Control

I did more editing on this photo than in my first clouds assignment. The sun was slightly poking out from behind one of the clouds, which is the effect I tried to emphasize in my first submission, so I tried to do some editing that would differentiate this image. I played with lots of different filters and effects in Photoshop, and eventually decided that inverting the colors on this image was the most effective one. The shadows on the bottom of the clouds turn brighter,

and the sun turns into an impossibly black hole, which I thought was cool. I also noticed that the horizon looked interesting with the colors inverted, so I decided to do minimal cropping. There is a light post in the bottom, as well as some smaller mountains and trees, and they are all stark white. I thought it created a really eerie mood that complimented the weird yellow sky really well.

Conclusion

Overall, I'm happy with this image. The only thing I would do differently is submit it along with my original image, so that people could see the difference that inverting the colors made. It was a little confusing for people seeing just the inverted image, and I think seeing the original would give them good context, to be able to recognize features that they otherwise couldn't, or would have to struggle to understand. That said, I do think that the image is effective. I think it captured a sea of clouds, and made it more interesting than what people can just look up and see.