



### The Bonneville Shoreline

On this warm summer night  
a mile along the trail  
800 feet above the city lights in the valley  
we choose a place to sit quietly.

It chooses us really.

The wind blows through tall, dry grass  
in and around scrub oak  
and stars begin to appear.

We are on the rolling feet of the Wasatch Mountains,  
once the shoreline of ancient Lake Bonneville.

Seventeen thousand years ago

we would have been sitting on the edge of a lake  
more than 300 miles long and 135 miles wide,  
home to many fish and amphibians.

Birds in marshes would have been common.  
Buffalo, horses, bears, even mammoths may have roamed the shores.

Tonight this shoreline is elevated retreat from the city.  
A place to welcome and receive impressions about shifting paradigms.

Seventeen thousand years ago  
I imagine the lake seemed everlasting.

But things change.

I'm told that glacial melt raised the water level  
just enough to exceed the elevation of the lake's lowest exit,  
spilling over Idaho's Red Rock Pass into the Snake River drainage,

I'm told the flood may have lasted a year.  
Lake Bonneville's outlet elevation was lowered by 375 feet.

A mile along the trail.  
Eight hundred feet above city lights.  
Seventeen thousand years later.  
Sitting on the Lake Bonneville Shoreline  
now crusted and dried into an elevated lookout.

Things change.

Tenneson Woolf, 2010