

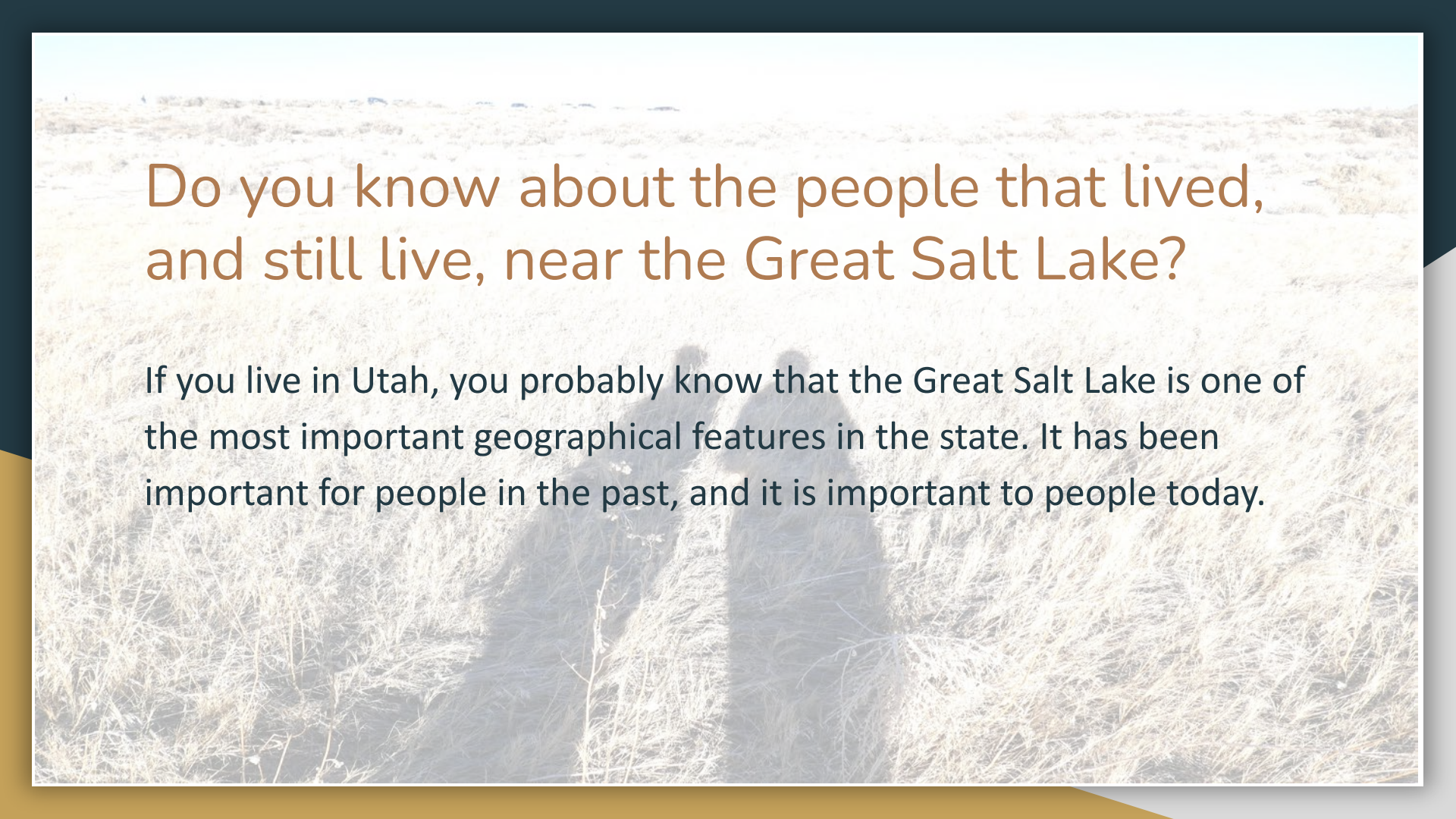
A wide, shallow body of water, likely a salt flat or a dry lake bed, reflects the sky and clouds. The water is calm, creating a clear mirror image of the sky above. In the background, a range of dark, rugged mountains stretches across the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, white and grey clouds, with some light breaking through near the horizon. The overall scene is serene and expansive.

The People of the Great Salt Lake

Do you know who once
lived where you are now?

This is a photo of my street on a frosty winter morning. My neighbors and I are not the first ones to live here. Before there were houses and streets, people lived here and traveled through. It is near a stream and it would have been a perfect place to camp and get food and water.

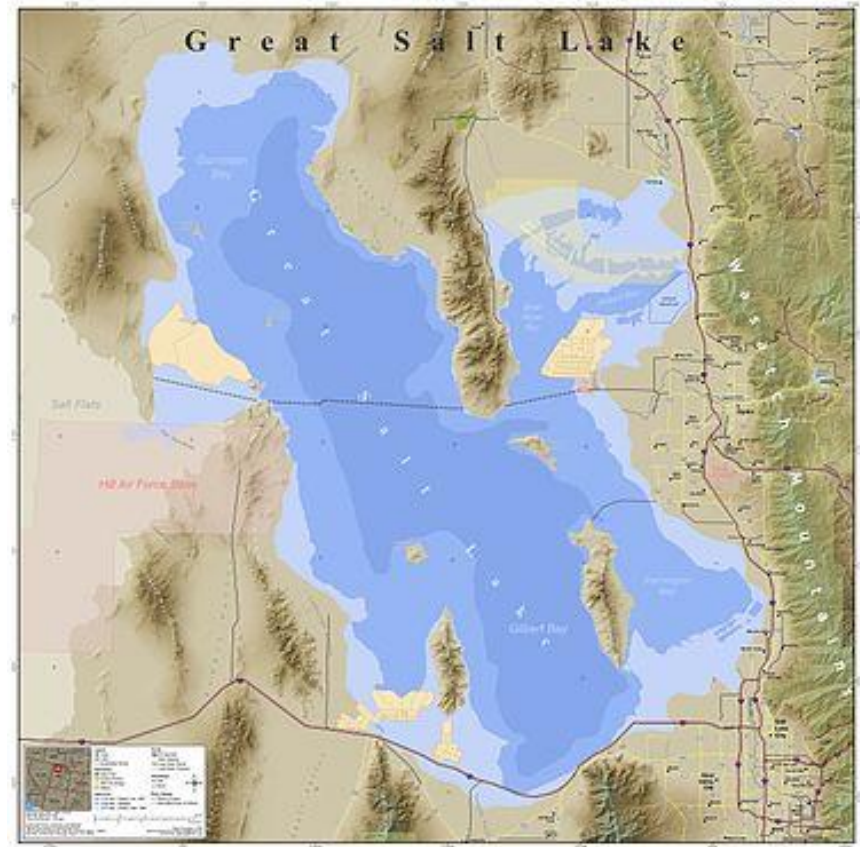


A person is walking away from the camera through a field of tall, dry, yellowish-brown grass. The person is wearing dark clothing and their shadow is cast on the grass. In the background, a flat, open landscape stretches to a distant shoreline where some small structures or vehicles are visible under a clear sky.

Do you know about the people that lived,
and still live, near the Great Salt Lake?

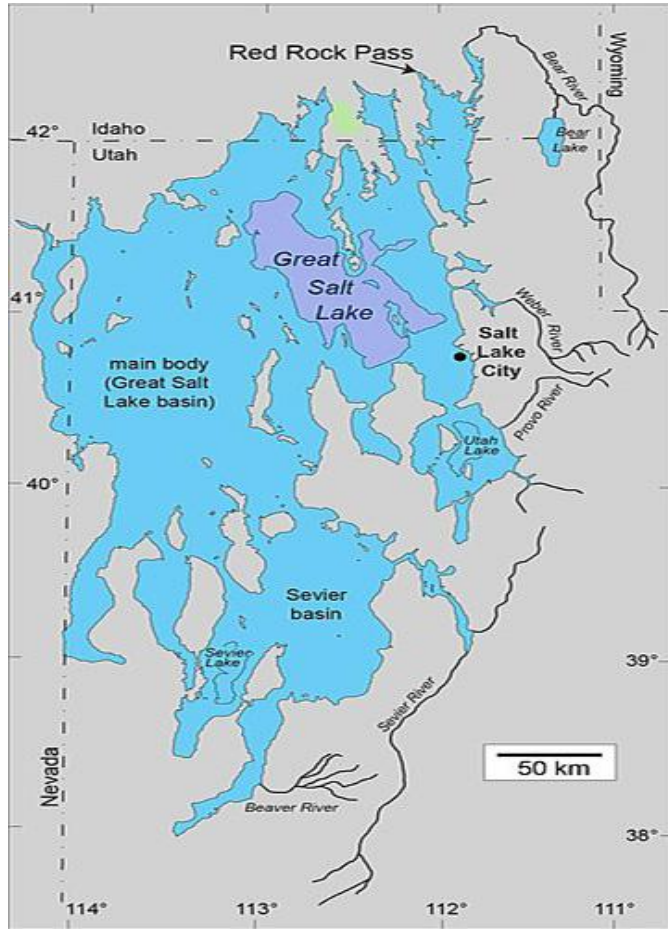
If you live in Utah, you probably know that the Great Salt Lake is one of the most important geographical features in the state. It has been important for people in the past, and it is important to people today.

The Great Salt Lake is big. In fact, it is the largest salt lake in the Western Hemisphere, and the eighth largest salt lake in the world!



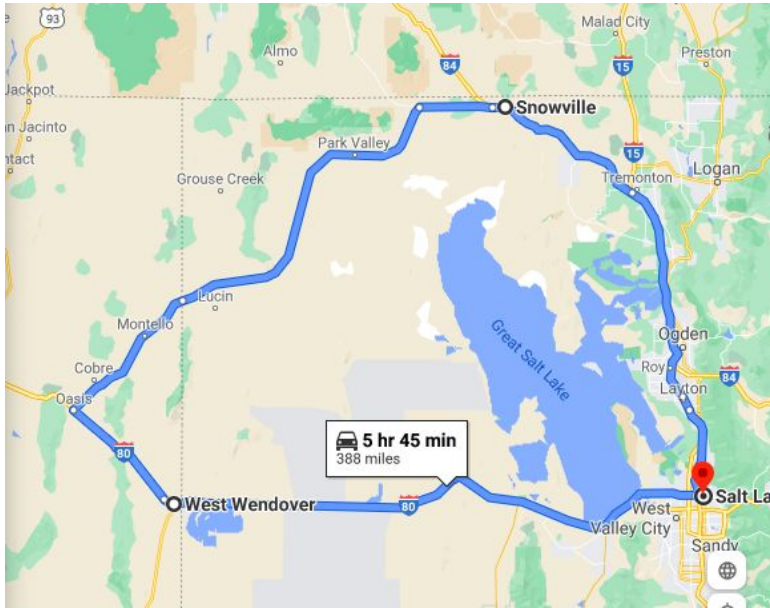
The Great Salt Lake is what is left over from a bigger lake that is known as Lake Bonneville, but over thousands of years, the lake got smaller.

Talk with your friends. Why might a very big lake get smaller?



Find the Great Salt Lake. It is purple. Lake Bonneville is blue. It was really big compared to the Great Salt Lake.

How Long Would It Take?



If you wanted to drive in a car around the the Great Salt Lake, you would have to start in the early morning right after you wake up and eat breakfast, and you would probably not get home until it was dinnertime. That is a LONG drive. How long would it take to walk that far?

You cannot drink the water from the Great Salt Lake. People and animals need fresh water and it is very hard to find around the lake, especially in the area west of the lake.



Badger found near Fish Springs Refuge

Thankfully, there are springs and seeps in some areas. A spring is water that comes from underground and not from on the surface. The animals and people that live in the area know where they are!

Why are springs like this so important?



Fish Springs National
Wildlife Refuge

Simpson Springs



Who used to live near the Great Salt Lake a long time ago? Do their grandchildren still live in the area?



We know from evidence found in caves that thousands of years ago the people who lived near the lake in the past were mainly hunters and gatherers. More recently, many Utah Native tribes have lived and still use the resources of the Great Salt Lake. Today the people of these tribes belong to the Ute, the Paiute, the Goshute, and the Shoshone Nations.

The Great Salt Lake area is still home to the Goshute and Shoshone Tribes

Notice the tribal lands colored green.

Today, two bands of the Goshute tribe live on the south and west side of the lake.

The Northwestern Shoshone people have a tribal office in Brigham City, just north of the lake.

The lake and the land remains important to them.



Utah Division of Indian Affairs: <http://indian.utah.gov/triballandmap.html>

Who else lives around the Great Salt Lake today?



Today, many people have moved from other places in the country and even the world, to live around the Great Salt Lake.

On the east side of the lake there are now cities like Salt Lake City and Ogden. In north and south there are smaller towns, farms, and ranches.

The West Side of the Lake

The west side of the lake remains the area where the fewest people live. It is easy to go there and imagine that you are looking at a place that looks the same way it looked 500 years ago.





Today I live near the Great Salt Lake

Maybe you do, too. Or maybe you just visit the Great Salt Lake, like people have for many thousands of years.

Talk to your friends about the Great Salt Lake.

Do you live near it? Do you know anything about it? What do you think about it?