

# From Map to Masterpiece

Digital Scouting Tools for Landscape Photographers

The logo features a stylized mountain range above the name 'Meredith Fontana' in a cursive script, with 'NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY' in a smaller, sans-serif font below it.

Meredith Fontana  
NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

# Hello!



Nature  
Photography  
Academy

Meredith Fontana  
NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

© Mike Henckley

# Overview

Goal: learn essential digital scouting tools + workflow so you can create unique images.

- Scouting basics
- 4 part LITA scouting framework
- Digital tools overview
- Step-by-step workflow w/ demo



**Download resources at end**

# What is digital scouting?

exploring/surveying an area using digital tools

- assess terrain, lighting, compositions, and seasonal changes prior to heading out



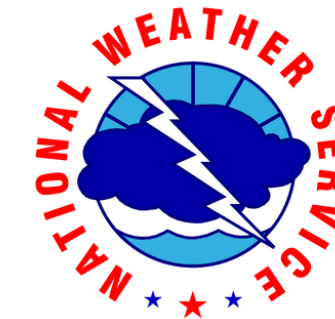
PHOTO  
EPHEMERIS



GAIA GPS



AllTrails



Google Earth



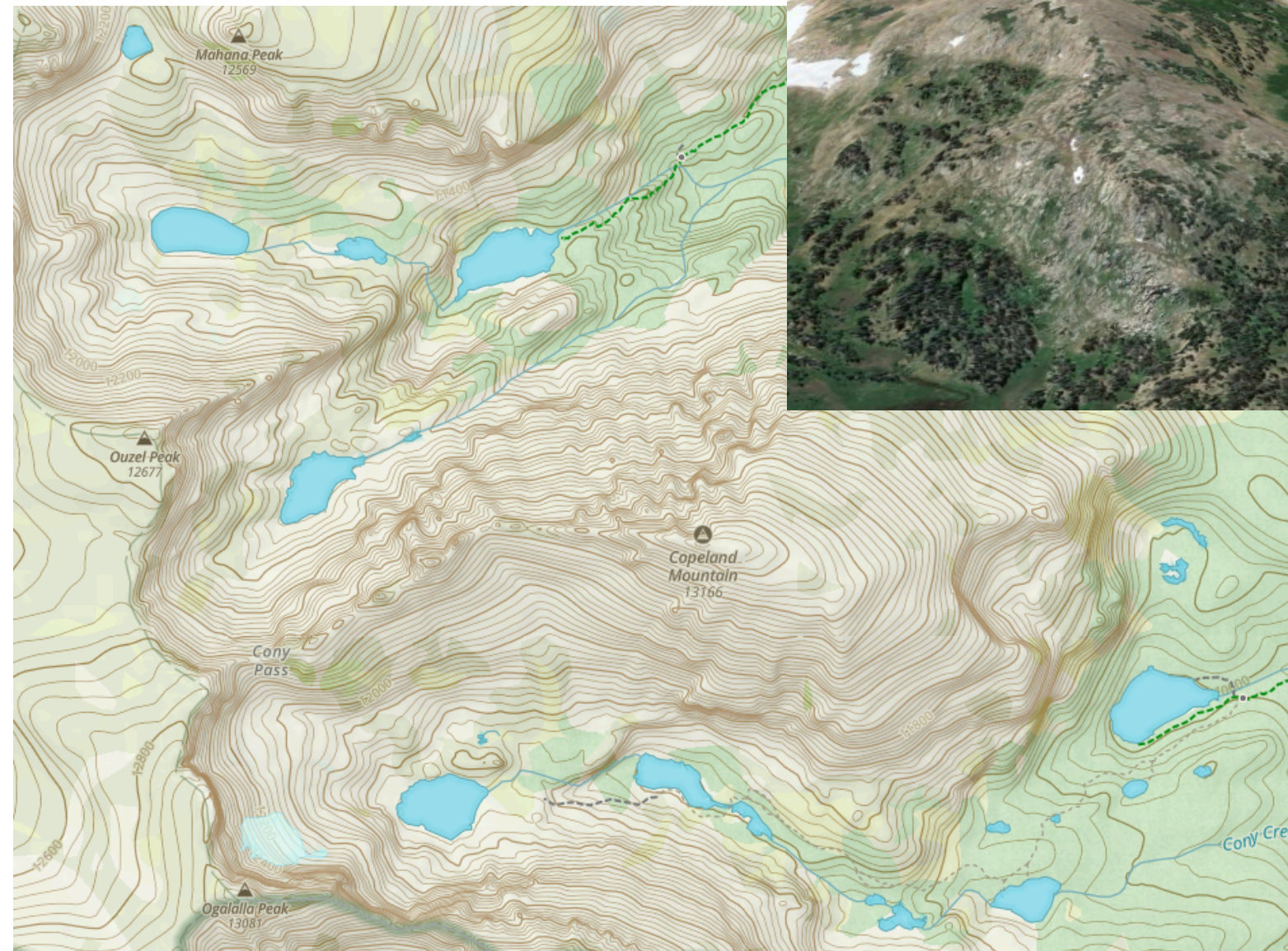
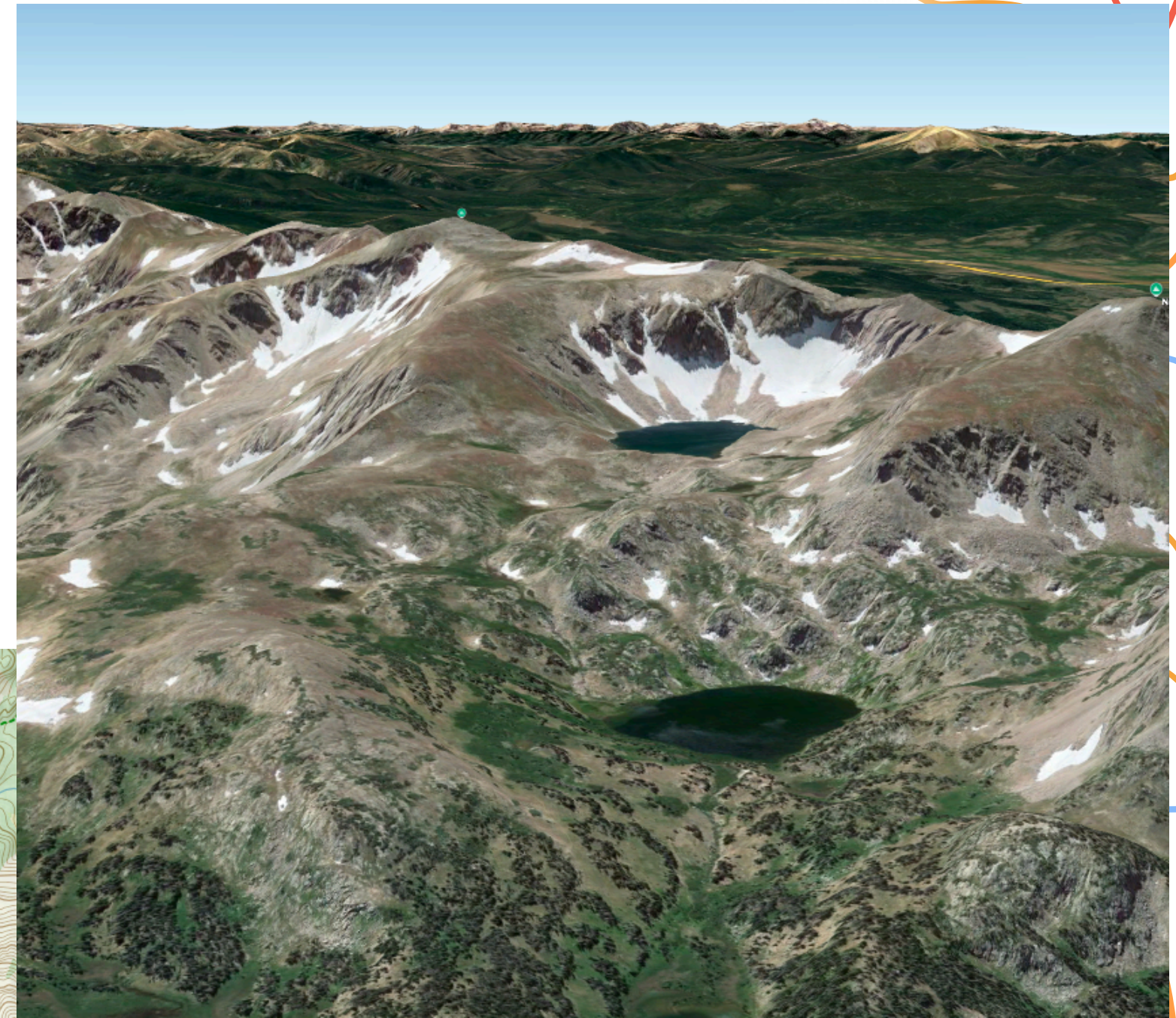
PhotoPills



Windy.com

# Why scout digitally?

- Efficient
- Find unique locations
- Precise
- Previsualize
- Adaptable

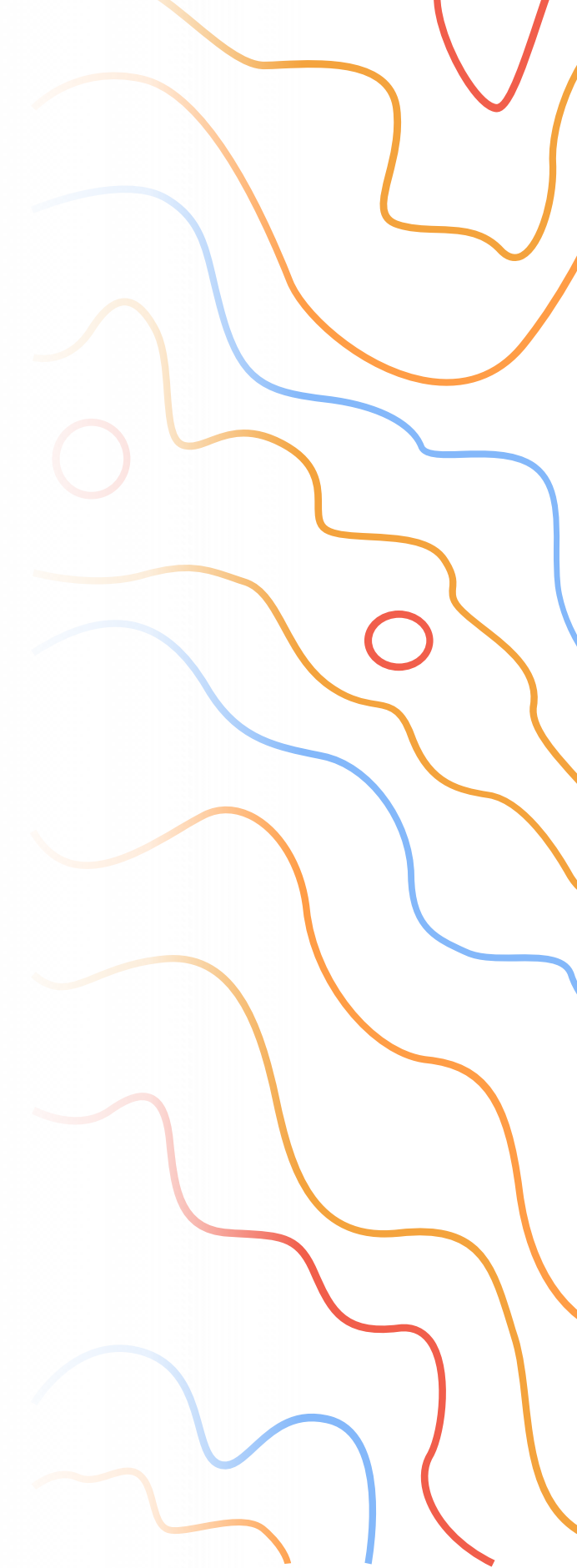
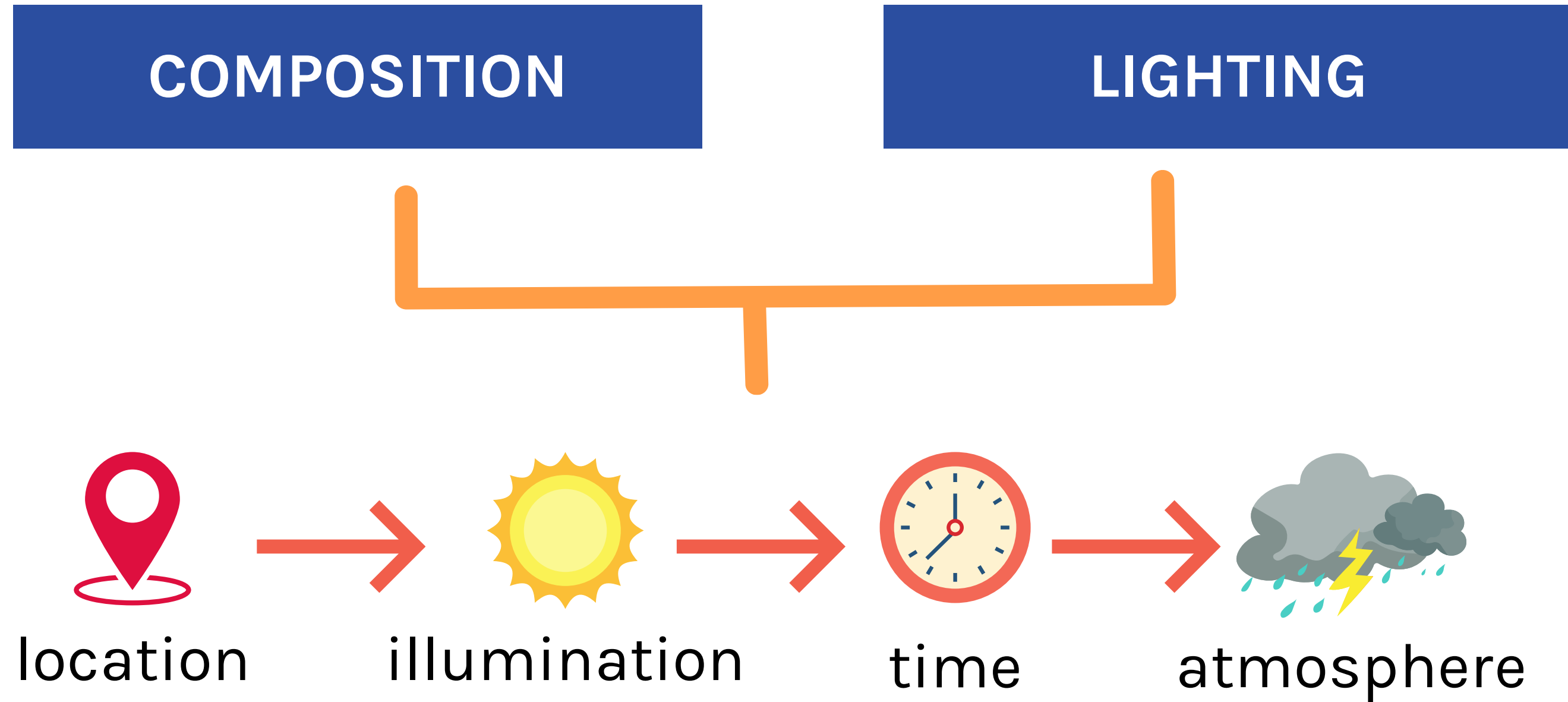




**Stay open minded!**



# Scouting basics

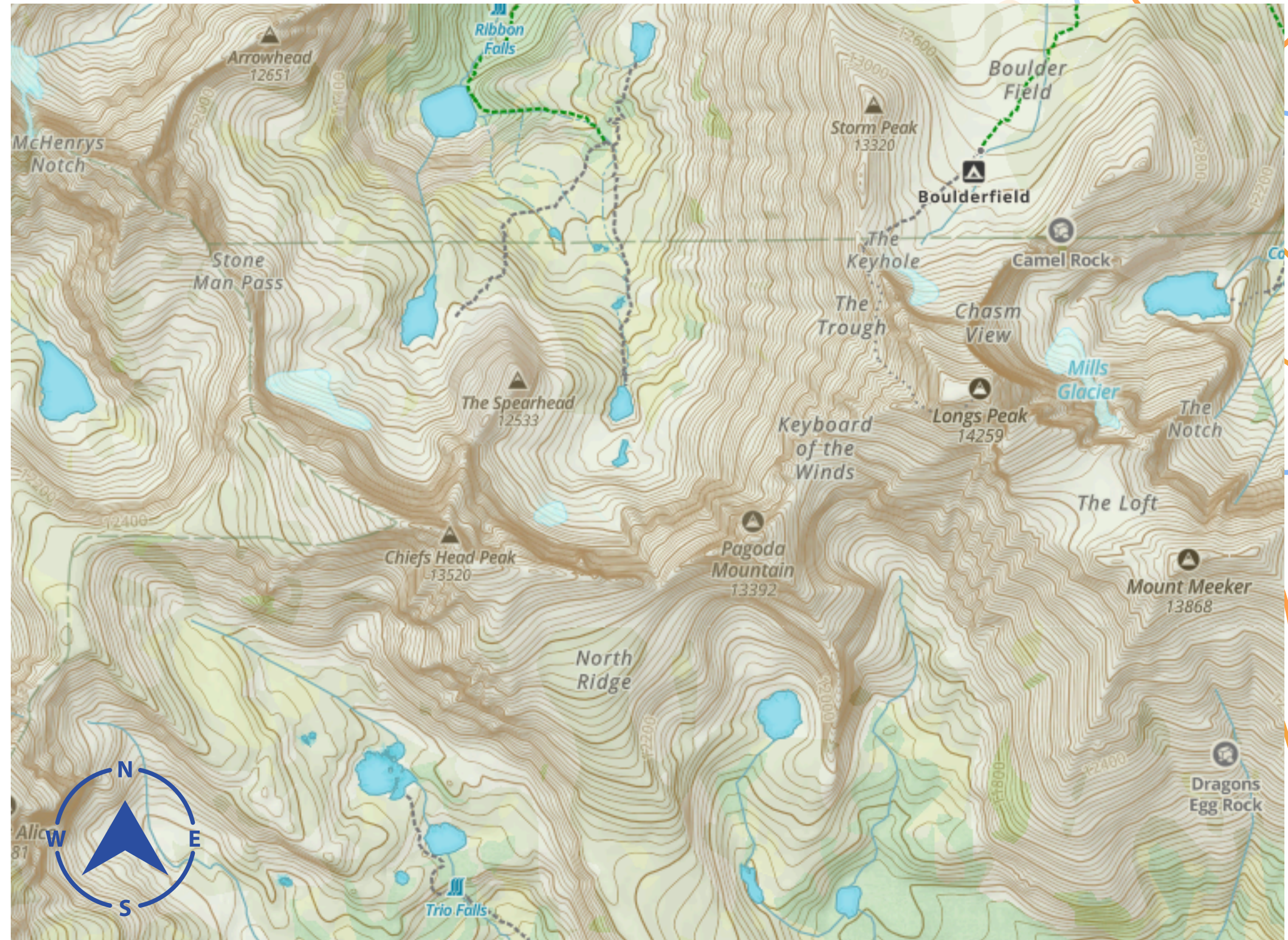


## Topographic “Topo” Maps

# 1. Location

Guidelines for scouting locations:

- Become familiar with the terrain.
- Identify prominent natural features/potential subjects.
- Look for additional compositional elements that support your subject.



# 1. Location

Guidelines for scouting locations:

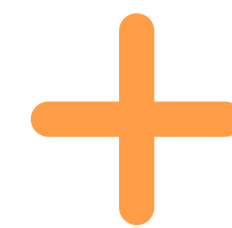
- Become familiar with the terrain.
- Identify prominent natural features/potential subjects.
- Look for additional compositional elements that support your subject.
- Check the accessibility of the area.



# 1. Location

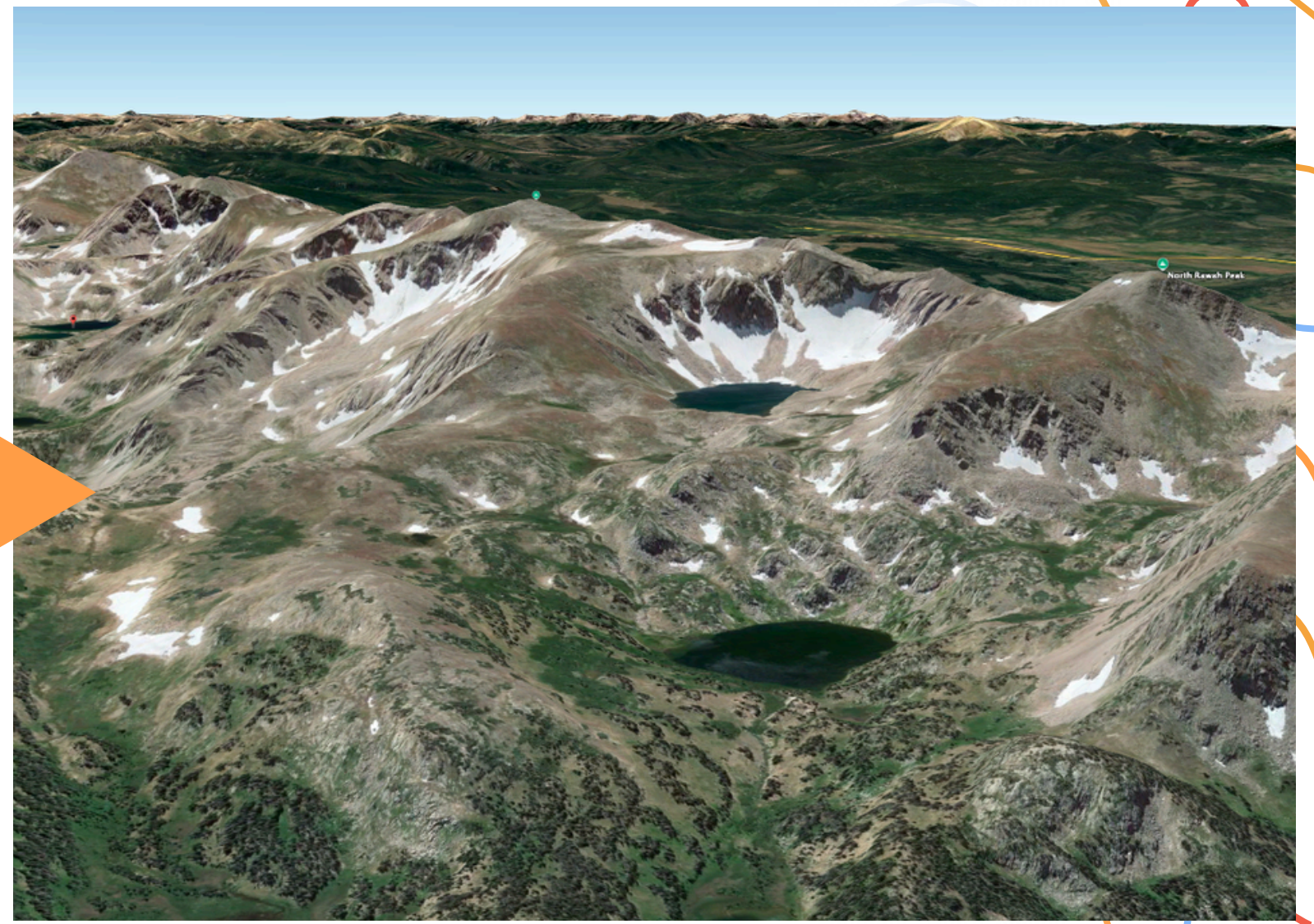
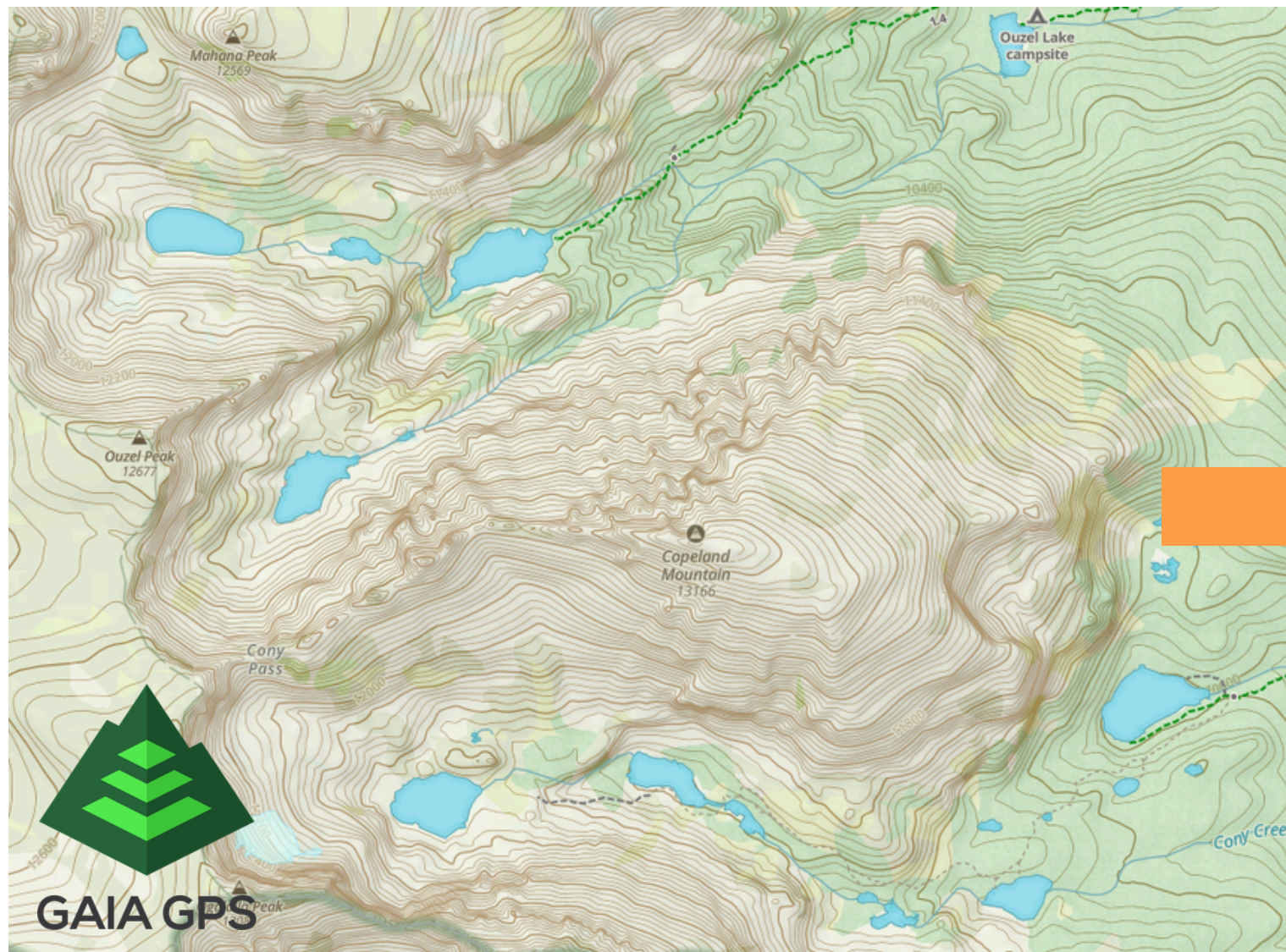
Digital tools for location scouting:

## Mapping Applications



Google Earth

# 1. Location

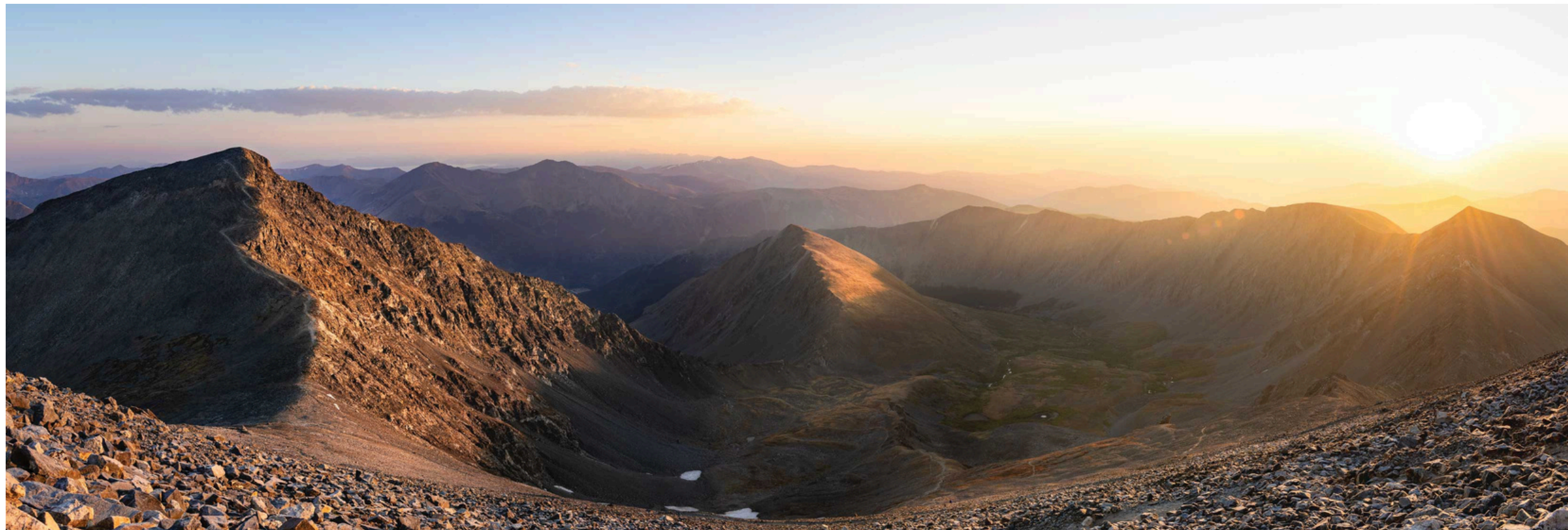


## 2. Illumination



Planning for lighting:

- Determine the direction of light (side, front, and backlighting).
- Identify the angle (high vs. low)
- Consider how the terrain will impact lighting.
- Predict the best color (cool/blue, warm/golden, neutral/mixed)
- Consider the intensity (direct, reflected, dappled, flat/even, etc.)



## 2. Illumination



Digital tools to predict and visualize sun, moon, and stars:



Mapping



3D Visualization

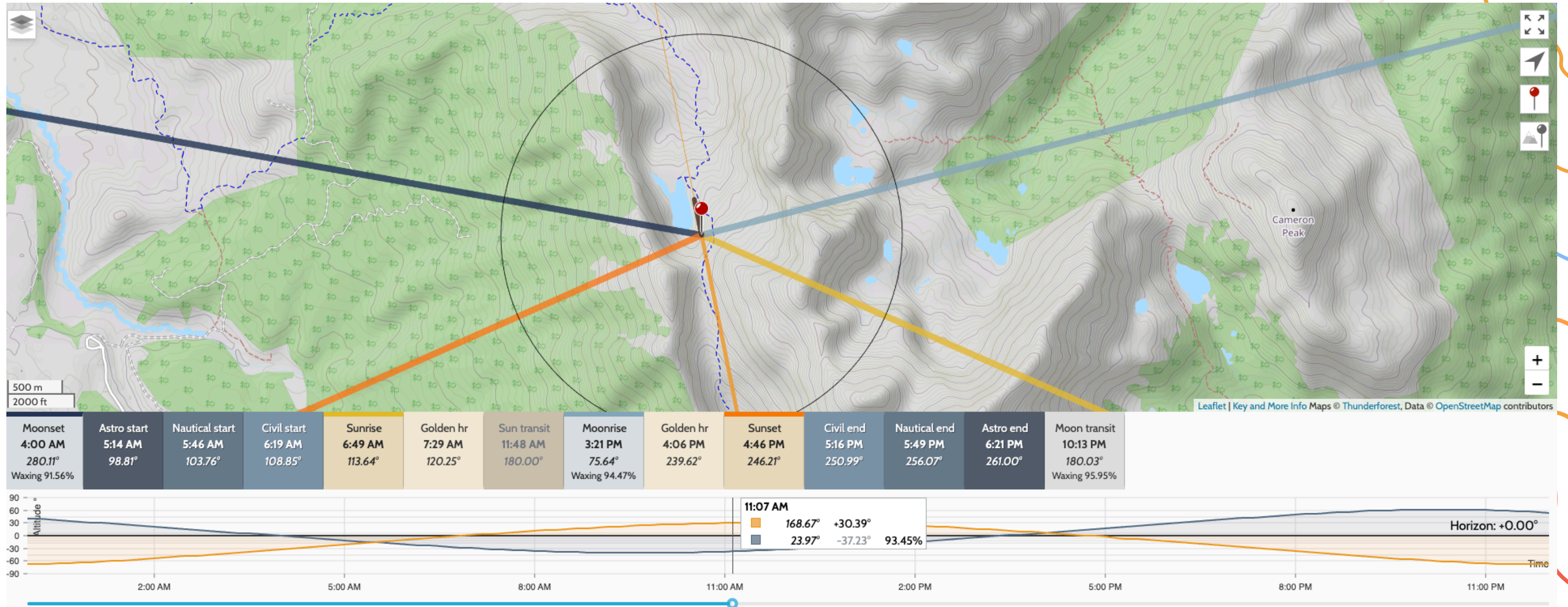


Augmented Reality (AR)

# 2. Illumination

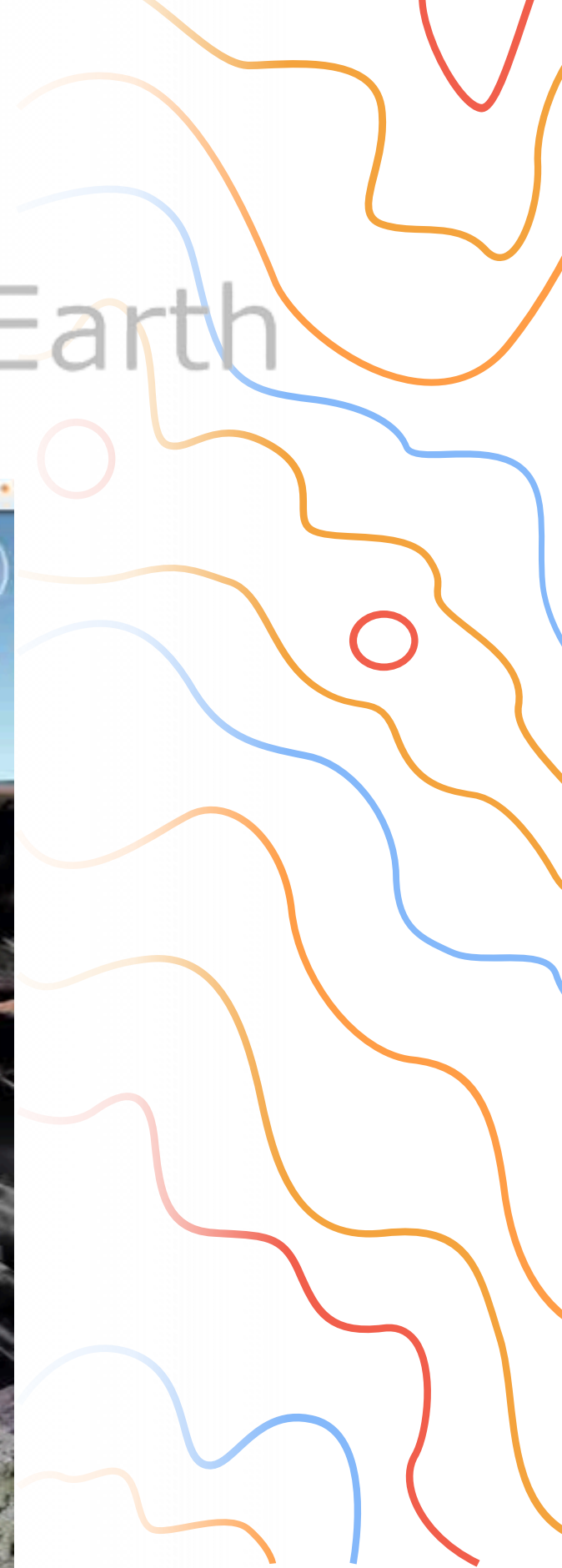
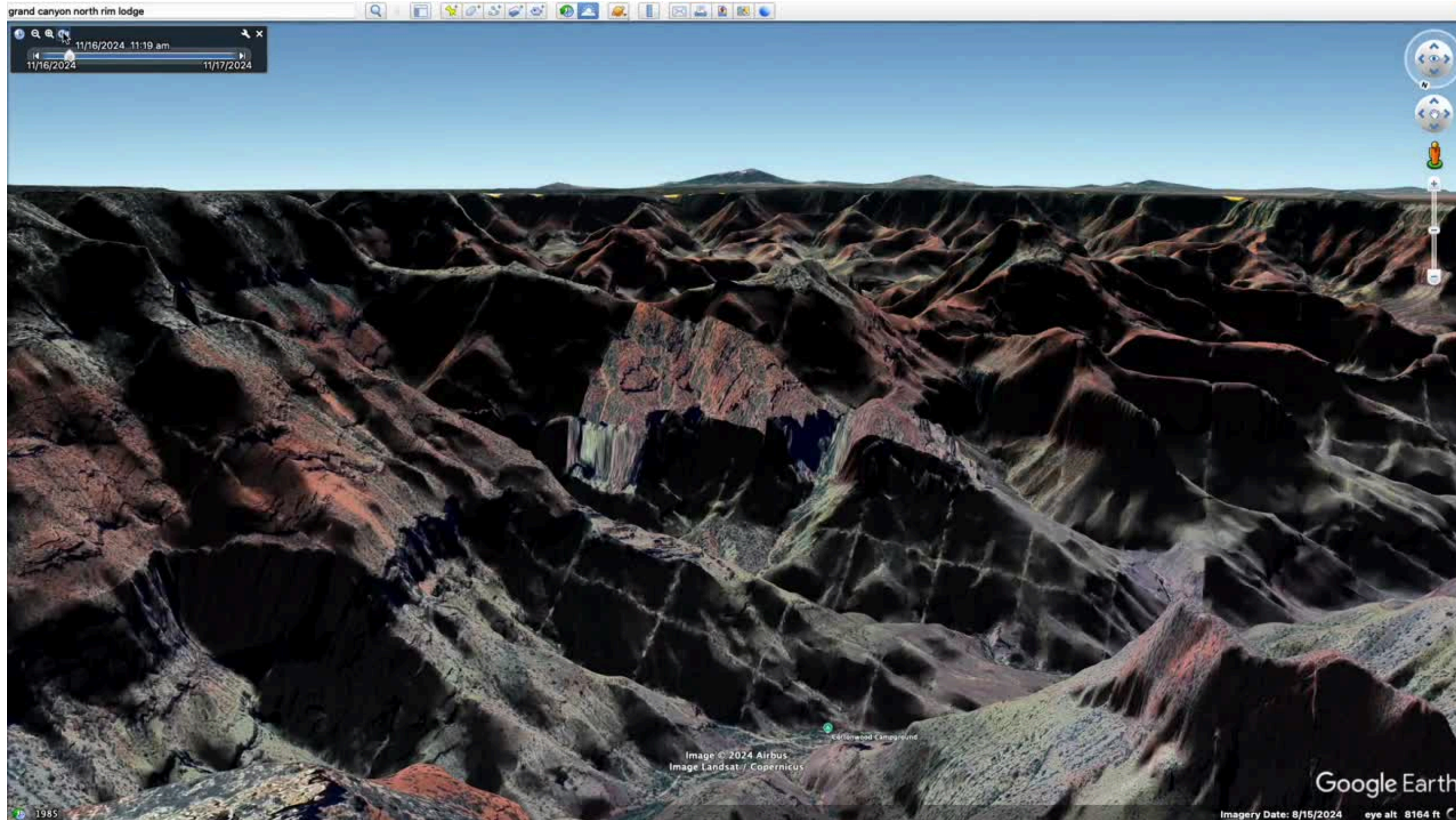


PHOTO  
EPHEMERIS



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## 2. Illumination



## 3. Time

Guidelines for choosing the best time:

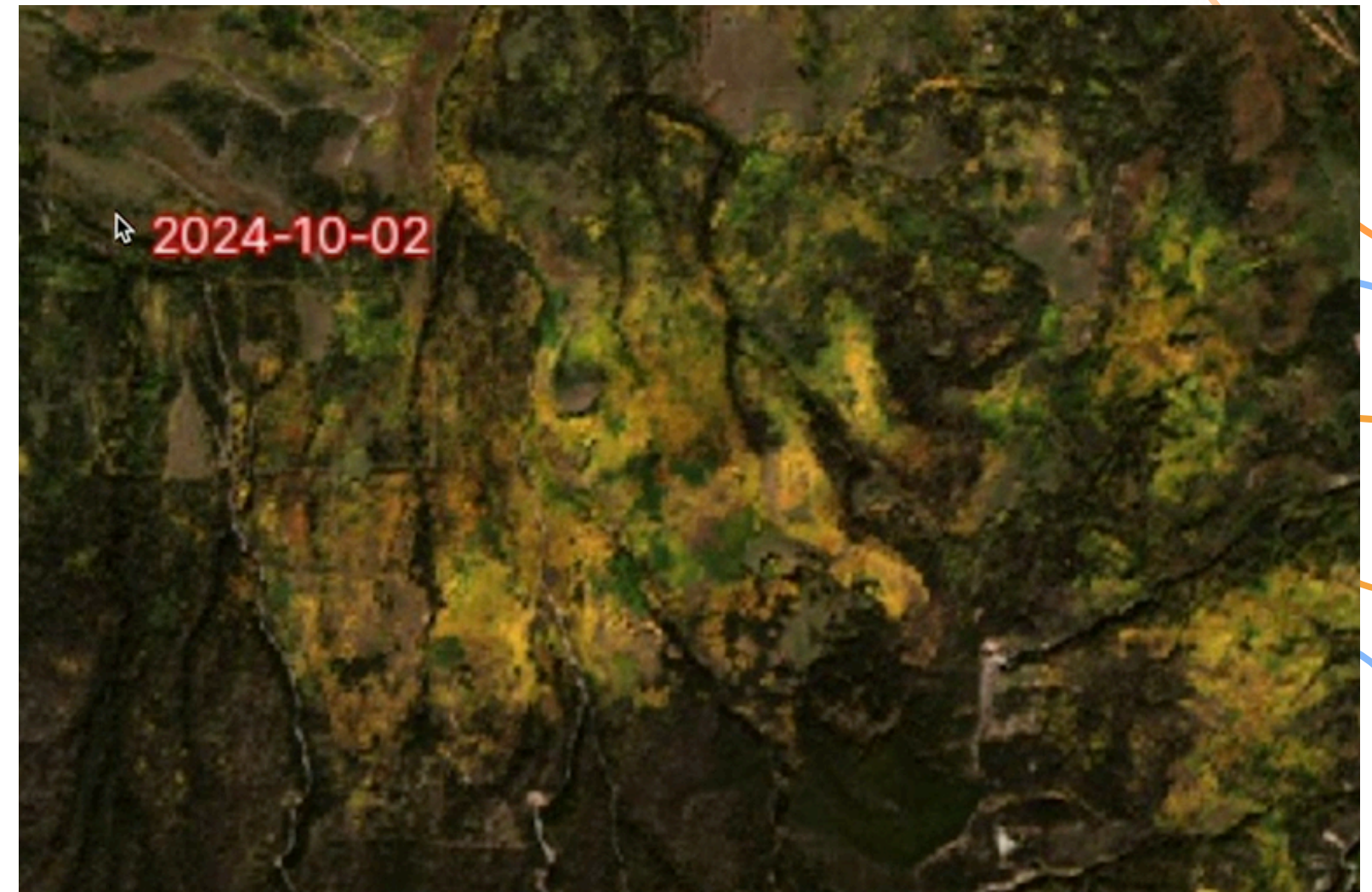
- Identify the optimal season (spring, summer, winter, or fall).
- Determine the time of day to shoot based on the ideal lighting you identified (golden hour, twilight, sun angle, etc.).
- Consider the best time based on accessibility + seasonal or daily weather patterns.



# 3. Time

Digital tools to help time your shots:

## Timing seasons



Tor M  
September 29, 2024



Easy to park

Great conditions

Great views

If you get here before sunrise you'll get a good parking spot and an uncrowded trail, and it's worth it to watch the sun come up over the mountains. Aspens are at peak right now!

# 3. Time

Digital tools to help time your shots:

## Timing seasons



Alpenglow

## Times of day.



| *Digital Scouting Tools for Landscape Photographers*




Alpenglow

● First Light	5:13 AM
● Blue Hour	6:17 AM - 6:28 AM
● Golden Hour	6:28 AM - 7:26 AM
● Sunrise	6:46 AM
● Daytime	7:26 AM
● Golden Hour	4:05 PM - 5:03 PM
● Sunset	4:45 PM
● Blue Hour	5:03 PM - 5:14 PM
● Last Light	6:19 PM





# PhotoPills


Thursday, November 14, 2024 | 3:22 PM  
S Franklin St 691 - Denver, United States


<  >


🕒 6:44 AM Day time 🕒 4:44 PM


5:43 AM  Nautical twilight  
Astronomical twilight ends






6:15 AM  Blue hour  
Civil twilight begins  
Nautical twilight ends

6:26 AM  Golden hour  
Blue hour ends

6:44 AM  Sunrise  
Civil twilight ends

7:24 AM  Day time  
Golden hour ends

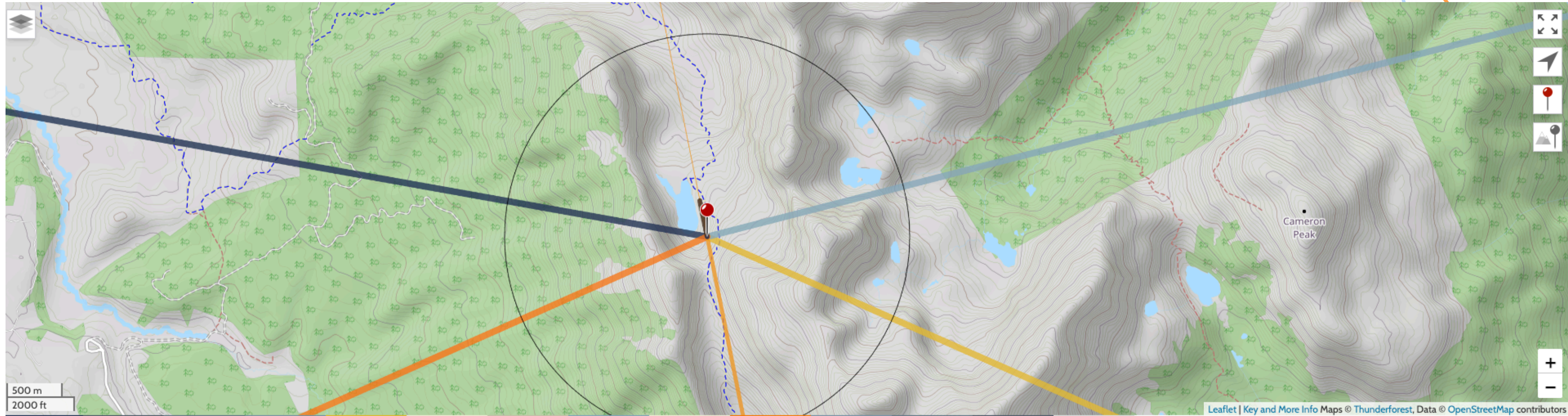
3:48 PM  Moonrise  
Waxing Gibbous (98.6%)

 Info  Calendar  AR  Seasons  Action

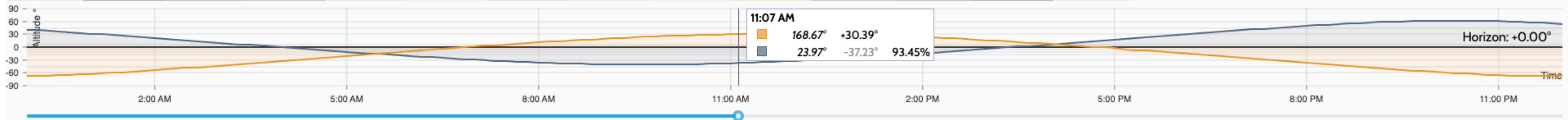


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# | Digital Scouting Tools for Landscape Photographers



<b>Moonset</b> 4:00 AM 280.11° Waxing 91.56%	<b>Astro start</b> 5:14 AM 98.81°	<b>Nautical start</b> 5:46 AM 103.76°	<b>Civil start</b> 6:19 AM 108.85°	<b>Sunrise</b> 6:49 AM 113.64°	<b>Golden hr</b> 7:29 AM 120.25°	<b>Sun transit</b> 11:48 AM 180.00°	<b>Moonrise</b> 3:21 PM 75.64° Waxing 94.47%	<b>Golden hr</b> 4:06 PM 239.62°	<b>Sunset</b> 4:46 PM 246.21°	<b>Civil end</b> 5:16 PM 250.99°	<b>Nautical end</b> 5:49 PM 256.07°	<b>Astro end</b> 6:21 PM 261.00°	<b>Moon transit</b> 10:13 PM 180.03° Waxing 95.95%
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## 4. Atmosphere



- Weather, smoke, haze, fog, light pollution all impact lighting, composition, color, mood, etc.
- Wait longer than you think you need to - the show doesn't end at sunset!



## 4. Atmosphere



- Weather, smoke, haze, fog, light pollution all impact lighting, composition, color, mood, etc.
- Wait longer than you think you need to - the show doesn't end at sunset!
- Go with the flow and stay open to opportunities.



## 4. Atmosphere



Digital tools for predicting atmospheric conditions:



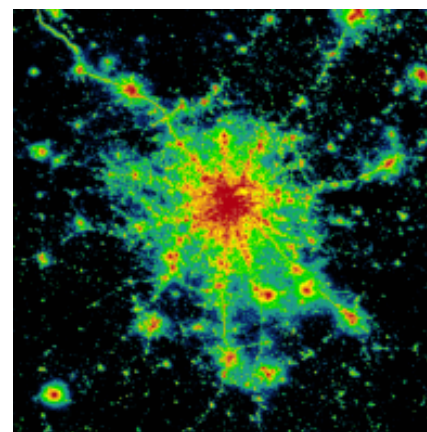
[weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov)



[fire.airnow.gov](https://fire.airnow.gov)

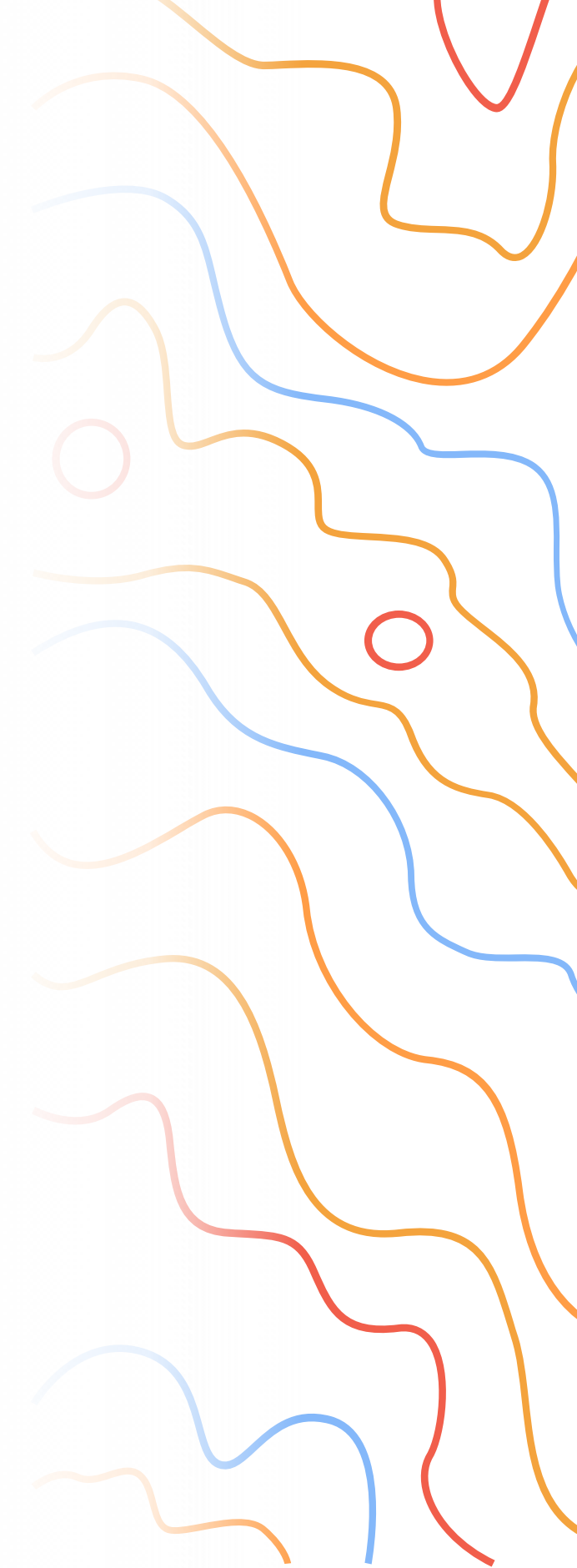
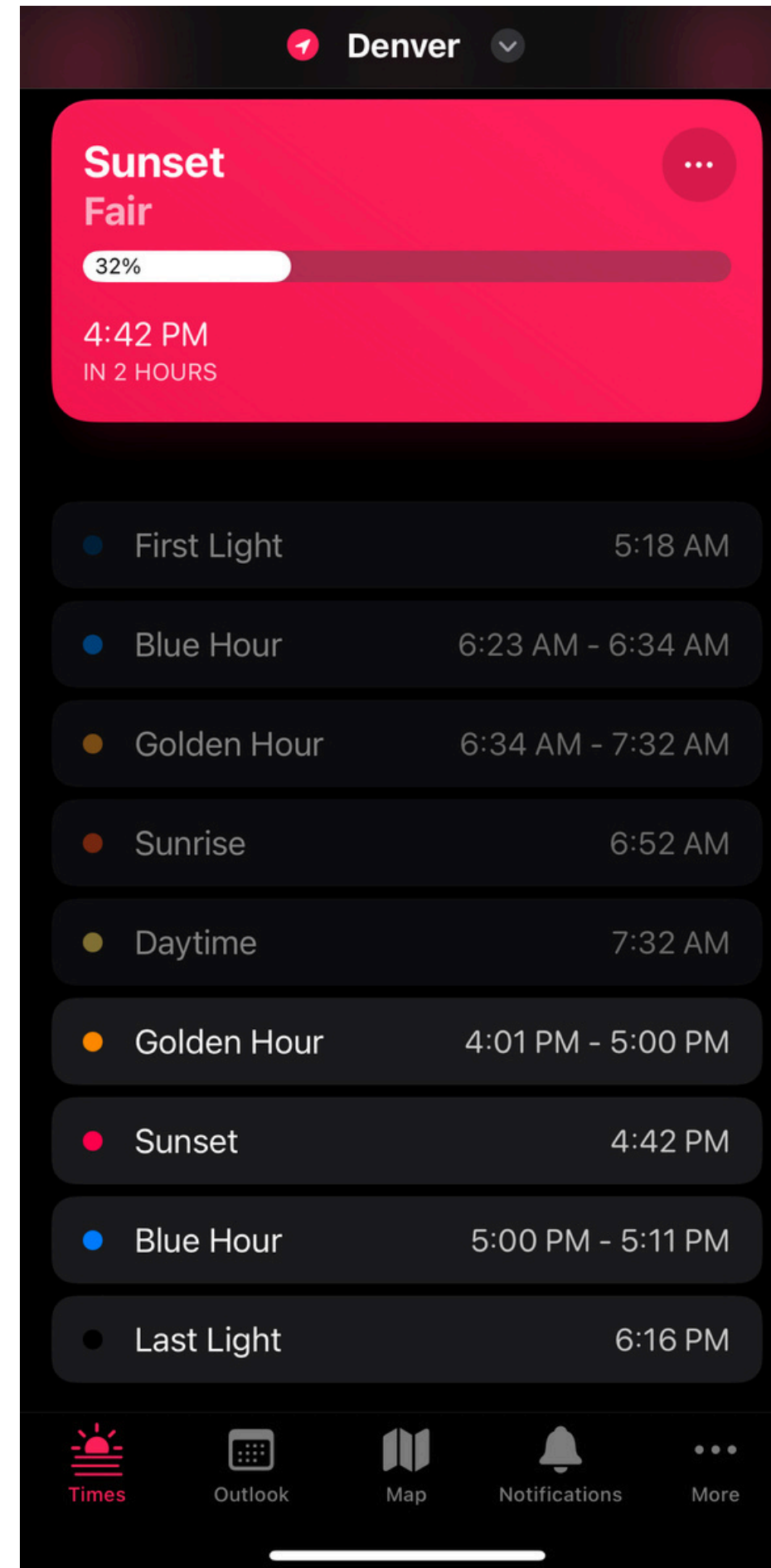


Alpenglow



[lightpollutionmap.info](https://lightpollutionmap.info)

# 4. Atmosphere

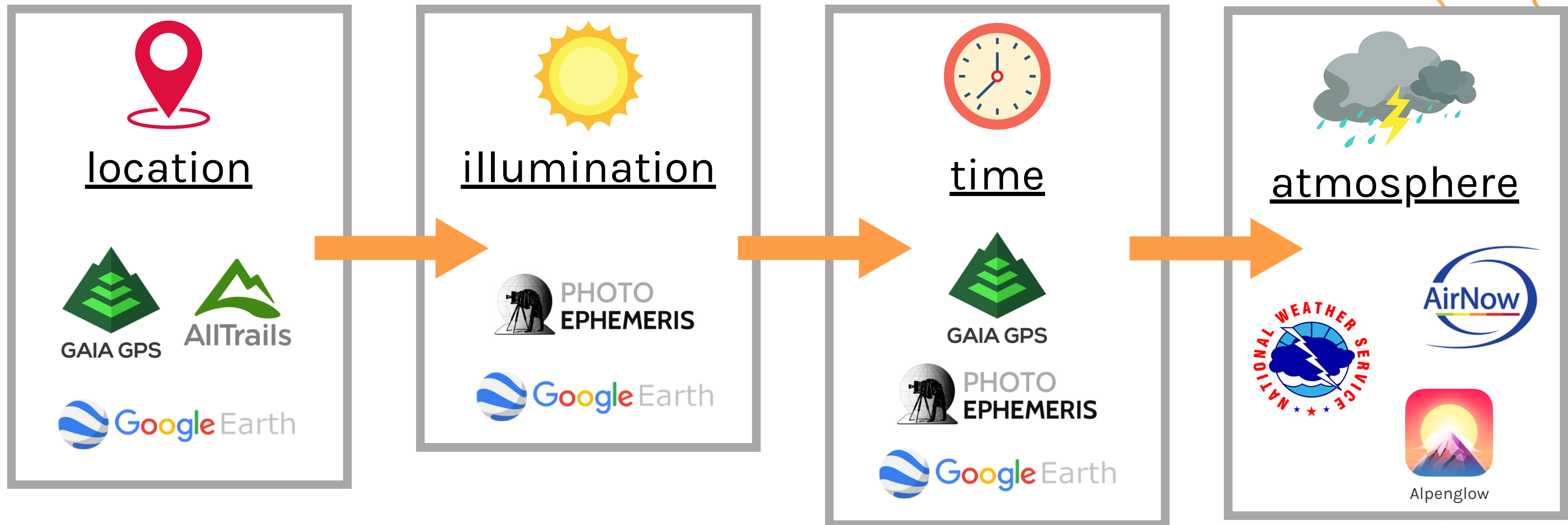


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# Workflow overview



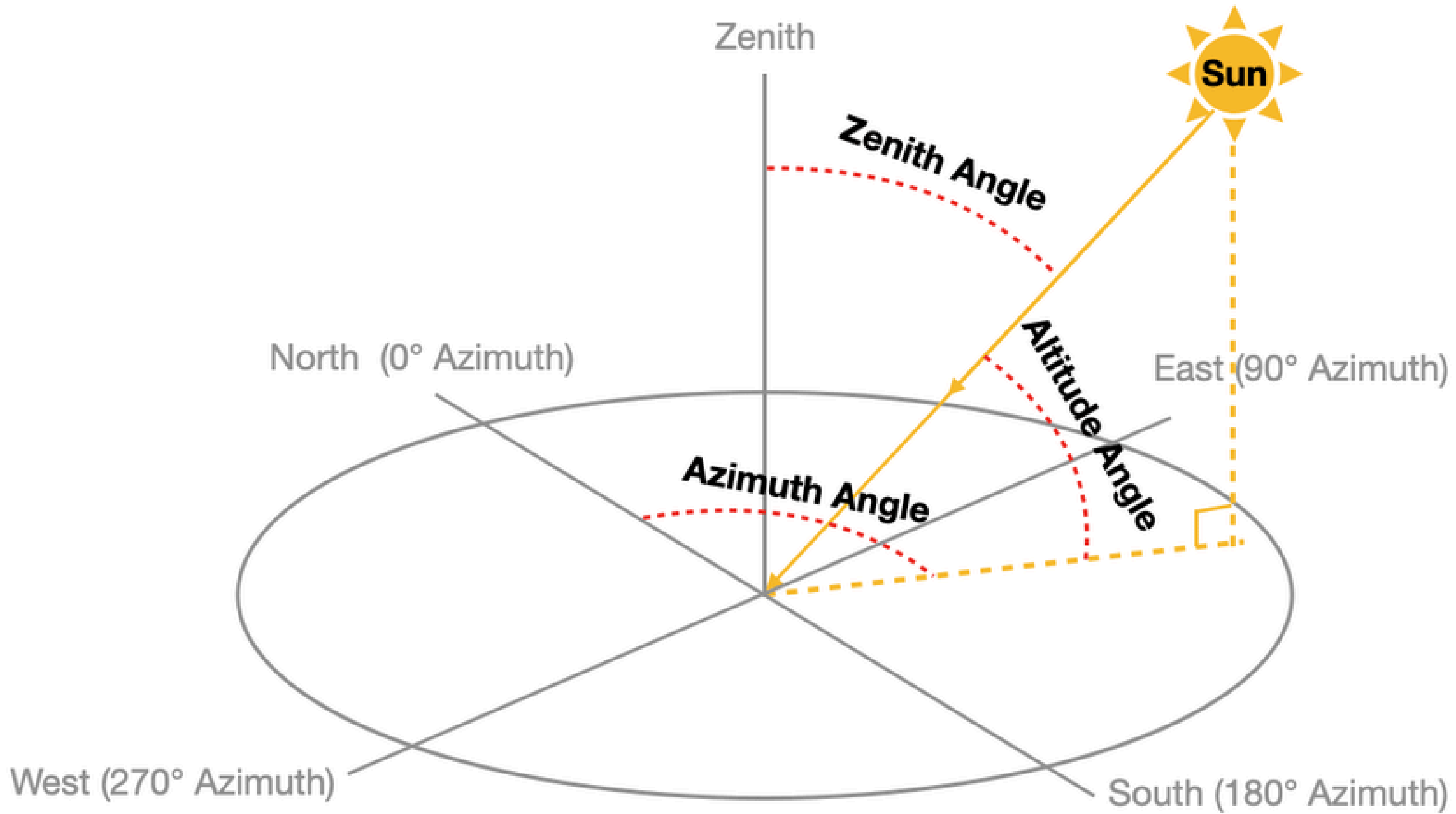
# Workflow overview



# Demo!

Putting everything together step-by-step.





# Thank You!

## Contact:

 [www.meredithfontana.com](http://www.meredithfontana.com)

 [meredith@meredithfontana.com](mailto:meredith@meredithfontana.com)

 [@meredith\\_fontana](https://www.instagram.com/meredith_fontana)

 [meredithfontana.substack.com](https://meredithfontana.substack.com)



 **FREE**  
to join!



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Photography  
Academy

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