

# ICE AGE TEXAS

## MEGAFUNA

The **Last Glacial Period (LGP)**, also known as the Last glacial cycle, occurred from around 115,000 to 11,700 years ago, and thus corresponds to most of the timespan of the Late Pleistocene.

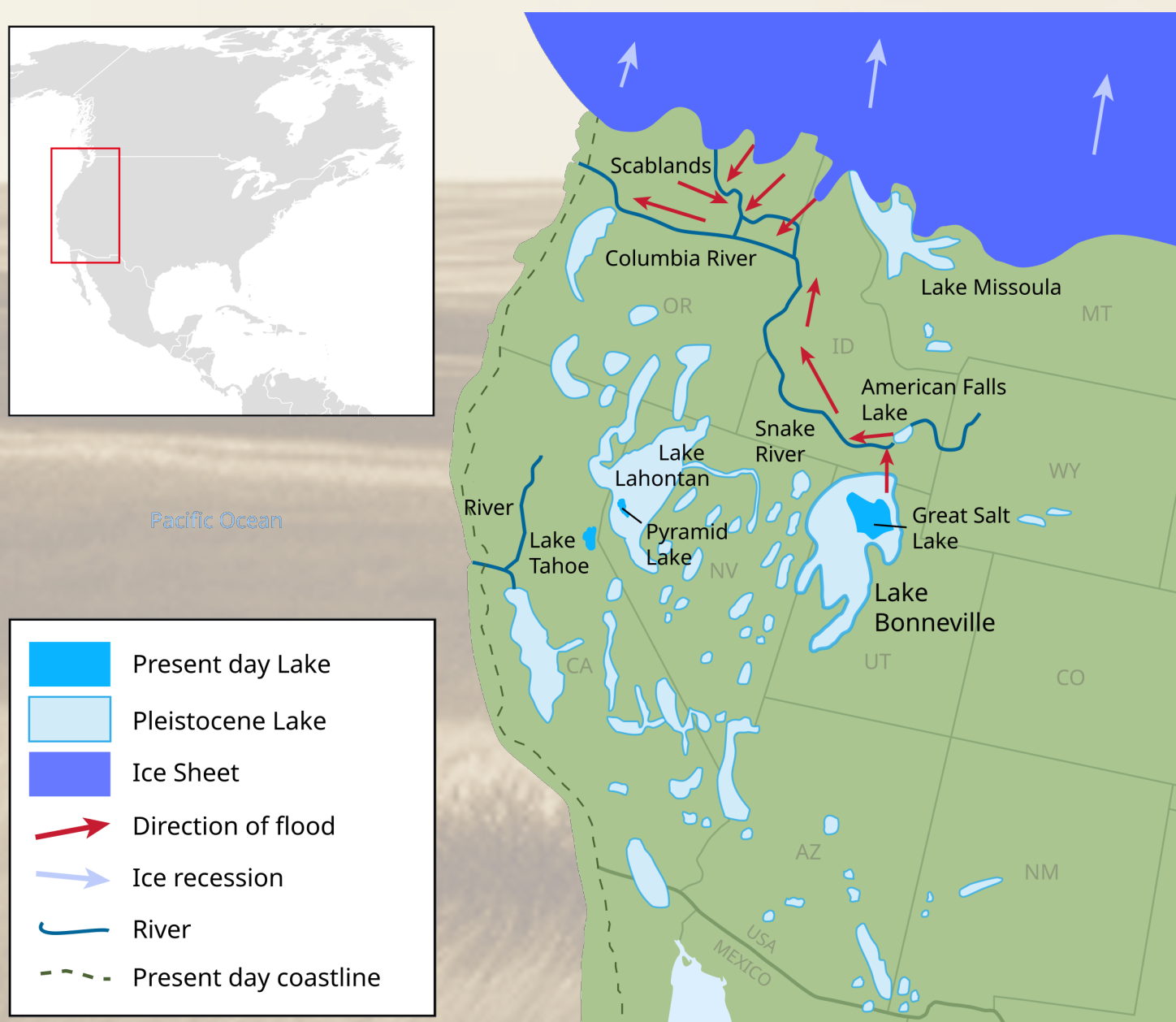
### Sea Levels Plunge, Bering Land Bridge Opens

When the Ice Age peaked, so much water was trapped as ice on land that sea levels dropped by 350 feet. Large areas that are now underwater were dry land. The Florida Peninsula was twice as big as it is now. The Bering Land Bridge was exposed between Alaska and Siberia. Around 21,000 years ago, giant glaciers at least a mile thick covered much of North America and Europe. Almost one-third of the present land surface of Earth was covered by ice.



### Huge Lakes in the West

The Great Salt Lake is a small remnant of a much larger lake, Lake Bonneville, that covered what is now Salt Lake City and much of western Utah. This giant lake was the result of higher precipitation in the area during the Ice Age.



### Megafauna Thrive in Cold Climate

South of the great ice sheets, big animals (megafauna) were plentiful. Giant beavers were as big as black bears, black bears were as big as grizzlies, and grizzlies were dwarfed by the short-faced bear. The giant beaver, short-faced bear, giant ground sloth, and many other megafauna went extinct at the end of the Ice Age.

### Part of North America Resembled African Savanna

During the Ice Age, relatives of modern African animals — cheetahs, lions, camels, zebras, and elephants — lived here. Horses evolved in North America and then spread to Asia via land bridges before going extinct here, only to be re-introduced by Europeans. Texas was also home to spectacular species like mammoths, saber-toothed cats, and glyptodonts as big as VW Beetles.

