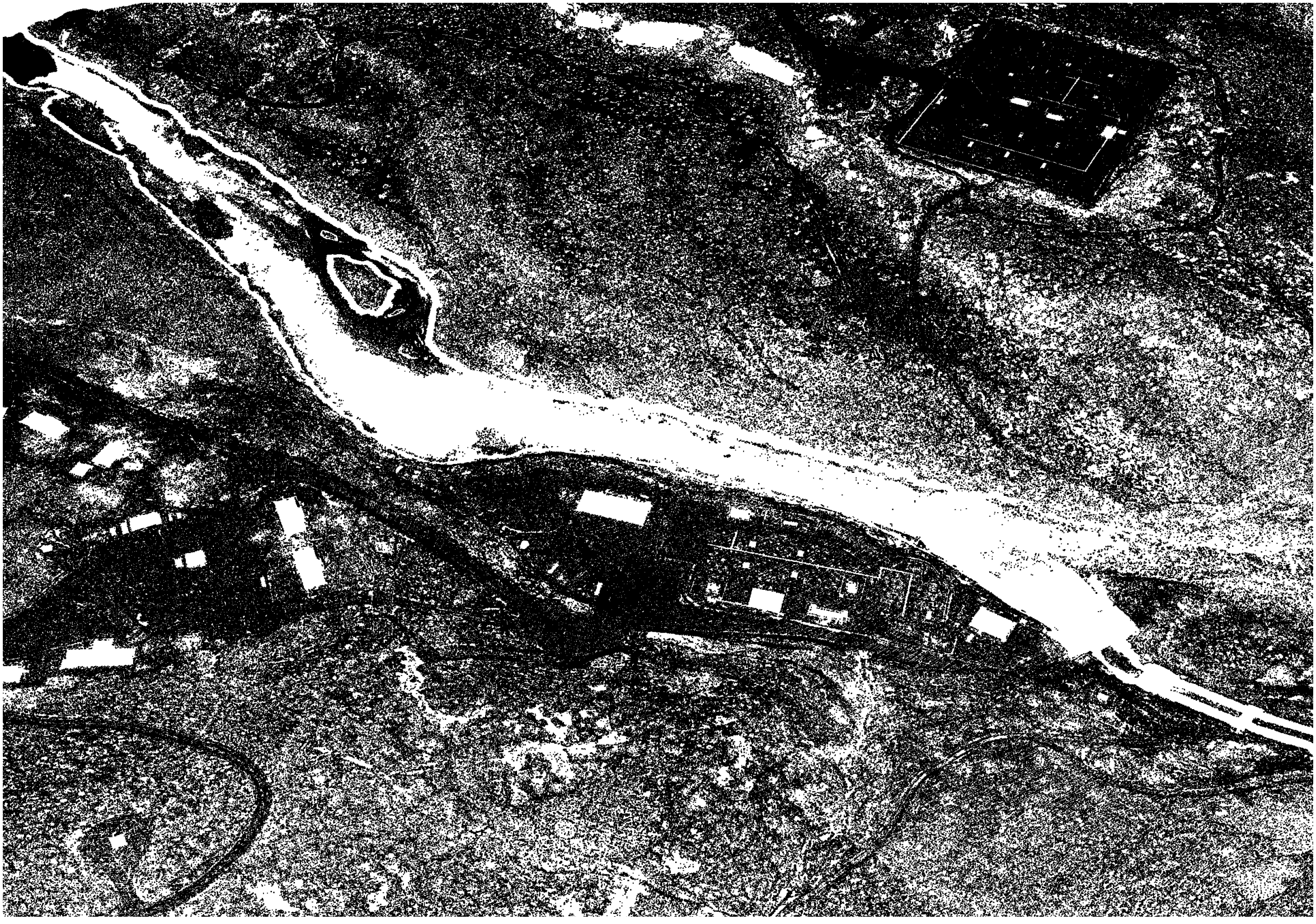


Meandering towards Continuity

Reorienting the focus of landscape architecture from mitigation towards relation

"In her influential work Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains that "Indigenous" is a term that emerged from, and found purpose in, the struggles of colonized peoples, gaining momentum in the 1970s: The term has enabled the collective voices of colonized people to be expressed strategically in the international arena. It has also been an umbrella enabling communities and peoples to come together, transcending their own colonized contexts and experiences, in order to learn, share, plan, organize and struggle collectively for self-determination on the global and local stages.

For some, "Indigenous" implies defeat, dispossession, and erasure. For others, "Indigenous is like an "indelible stain", marking you and your people as lost or losing. ***Thus, when we lay our terms and names onto others, we risk erasing their experiences of themselves and replacing them with our own.****" (Case, 2021, pp. 46)*

Case, Emalani. Everything Ancient Was Once New: Indigenous Persistence from Hawaii to Kahiki. University of Hawaii Press, 2021.

"When we take a less compressed historical view, we see the continuity and persistence of Indigenous communities as they adapted to dramatic changes. We see the people of a specific place changing as the place itself changed." (Akins & Bauer, 2021 , Introduction 4)

Akins, Damon B., and William J. Bauer Jr. We Are the Land: A History of Native California. University of California Press, 2021.

Table of contents

Scholar Reference Framework
i.

ii.
Process/Overview

iii.
Terminology

0.0
Positionality

1.0
Contextualization

1.1 Landscape Architecture, Parks, and Indigenous Erasure
1.2 The Ongoing Violence of Parks
1.3 Settler Environmentalism and Indigenous Erasure
1.4 Dams, Cultural Genocide, and Displacement
1.5 Decolonization, Sovereignty, and the Limits of Design

2.0
Klamath River - Kikaceki

2.1 History of the Klamath River
2.2 Resurgence of Kikaceki
2.3 Land Return
2.4 Language of the watershed
2.5 Relation with Water
2.6 Relation with Fire
2.7 Position as a designer
2.8 Listening as method

Listening as Method:
Sami's Ask

Listening as Method:
Fluid Occupancies

Reciprocity

Pause

3.0
Grounding/Watering/Tending

Grounding the role of landscape architects at Kikaceki through Matunga's theory

3.1 Grounding the Role of Landscape Architects
3.2 Framing Kikacéki through Indigenous Planning
3.3 Situating the Process at Kikacéki
3.4 Asking the Core Questions
3.5 Reorienting Outcome Aims at the Boat Launch Site: From Recreation toward Relation
3.6 Meandering towards Continuity

iv.
Concluding Reflections

v.
Acknowledgements

References

".....My people who used to live spiritually
are now embarrased
to treat the river as sacred,
to worship the mountains,
to follow their ancestors
and to call the earth Maa, mother.
Hiding their real identities
to free themselves of the uncivilized selves,
some are turning to Christianity now,
someone is becoming a Hindu,
someone Jain, someone Muslim.
Since a few so-called elites
of my country declared
the mahua uncivilized,
my people have started
feeling uncivilized too....."

- 'Uncivilised mahua' by Jitendra Vasava *(Adivasi Poet)*
This poem is translated from Dehwali Bhili and Hindi by Pratishtha Pandya, posted on People's Archive of Rural India

0.0 Positionality

I situate this research within an ongoing process of learning and unlearning, grounded in relational accountability as articulated by Indigenous research scholar Margaret Kovach. As an "exogenous other" or an "arrivant", I begin from a position of migration and limited connection with land and water. For much of my childhood years, I understood Tocklai, a small tributary of the Bhodgoi which is a southern tributary of the Brahmaputra, behind my grandaparents home in Assam - as a drain, and assumed that Tocklai was the Assamese word for a polluted drain. This assumption was not explicitly taught; it emerged through a practice of distance and neglect. I later came to understand this as a form of ecological and cultural estrangement rather than a linguistic error.

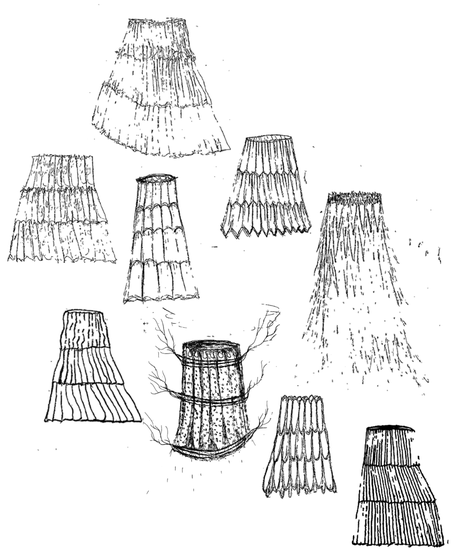
I am an upper-caste Hindu with ancestral roots in the Thar desert of Rajasthan and a family history of relocation to the floodplains of Brahmaputra in Assam two generations ago. Growing up, I lacked sustained relationships with the land and water I lived beside. I attended a boarding school with a largely tribal student population, situated within a colonial tea plantation landscape sustained by Adivasi tea plantation labor. While the tribal communities in the states of Northeast India hold social and political recognition, Adivasi tea-estate communities remain structurally marginalized. These layered realities existed in close proximity, yet the educational environment did not encourage inquiry into how land, labor, and power shaped the landscape and its inequities.

My early training in architecture further reinforced this separation by treating landscape primarily as a bounded site rather than as a living system shaped by ecological processes, governance, and care. Only during the COVID period, this orientation began to shift through studying land and water practices on Majuli Island and learning from long-term eco-cultural stewardship practices of the Mishing and Deori tribes under the guidance of Minal Sagare. These experiences emphasized that architecture emerges from people's sustained relationships with water and land, rather than the function and form binary that designers operate within.

I moved to the United States to study landscape architecture - focused on understanding river governance and water relations through the Klamath movement. Working under the direction of Alaa Hamid in the Sovereign Flows studio situated in the Klamath watershed which emphasized Indigenous lifeways and governance - our learning as a collective emerged through a shared study of the basin and a contextual understanding began to emerge through the stories and lived experiences shared by the people of the basin.

Through this process, I was introduced to the Shasta Nation's work in the Klamath Basin and later met with Shasta Preservation Officer Sami Difuntorum. Rather than identifying a research site myself, I was guided to a specific place understood as one wound among many within the returned Shasta lands. This direction shaped the scope and limits of my work, reinforcing that my role is not to define problems or solutions, but to respond to guidance offered through relationship.

In alignment with Kovach's framework, I do not claim authority over the knowledge, histories, or futures of the landscapes and communities engaged in this research. I understand landscape architecture here as a secondary, responsive practice—one that must emerge from sustained land–water relationships, governance structures, and Indigenous leadership.



i.
Scholar Reference Framework

My understanding of landscapes is shaped by the people living lightly along the Brahmaputra watershed. I had the opportunity to assist Minal Sagare in their study of the cultural land and water use practices of the people of Majuli. Through this engagement, I was introduced to the work of Anuradha Mathur and Dilip da Cunha, whose thinking on land–water relationships resonated with the conditions I was observing. Their work had first been recommended to me by Rohan Shivakumar and these rhizomtic connections shaped how I began to understand landscape as a condition produced through flows, saturation and change rather than as stable territory - supporting and supported by the theory of Tidalectics used by Barbadian poet Kamau Braithwaite, to engage 'alter/native' historiography as compared to linear models of colonial progress - all of which informs my position as an arrivant in this context.

This understanding continued to develop through my engagement with Sovereign Flow Studios focusing on the Klamath Watershed, led by Alaa Hamid. I was introduced to illustrations and storytelling by Edison Chiloquin and Leatha Chiloquin which portrayed the material and spiritual relationships between their people and the Klamath watershed showing how architecture and craft was a by-product of the landscape. We interacted with Edisons daughter Laurel Robinson along with Ron Reed(Karuk), Brook Thompson(Yurok-Karuk), Amy Cordalis(Yurok) and Joe Whittle (Caddo Nation of Oklahoma) during the course of the year long studio, which framed our broader understanding of the Klamath watershed and indigeneity. Work by Kyle Powys Whyte(Neshnabé man of Potawatomi descent), Jodi A. Byrd (Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma), and Judy Rohrer(Kanaka Maoli) helped us understand settler colonialism as an ongoing condition structured through infrastructure, governance, militarization, and spatial control. These frameworks helped situate dams, parks, recreation systems, and energy infrastructures as mechanisms that reorganize relationships between land, labor, water, and Indigenous presence - which is the focus of this project situated in Kikaceki within the Klamath Watershed.

My engagement with Sami Jo Difuntorum and the Shasta Indian Nation only started in the summer of 2025. Sami shared histories of the land and ongoing conditions surrounding the return of Kikacéki on my first visit. It had taken months of co-ordination and to finally meet Sami in Kikaceki was mometous for me. I had been working on Kikaceki without direct engagement for a prolonged period, and was in need of a conversation to successfully ground my work. The literature I was able to gather through James Sarmento's work on the Shasta Language helped me orient myself to the watershed but I was only able to proceed with some clarity after my conversations and my eventual meeting with Sami at Kikaceki. The landscape design task assigned by Sami is to screen the power grid and obscure its visibility from the ceremonial pit - iterations for which are explored in the fourth chapter of this document. The ceremonial pit is dug by the men in the community (does not require a designer) to finally continue their ways of life after a pause of more than a 100 years. Our engagement had to paused at the beginning of this year without a detailed explanation from Sami but I intend to reach out after the land back process has been completed in June.

Parallel to this, conversations with my roommate Alexander and an introduction through Lana Lopesi to the work of Emalani Case (Kanaka Maoli Scholar/Activist) contributed to shaping my understanding of trans-Indigenous connections across geographies. These perspectives expanded how Indigenous land struggles can be understood relationally across contexts while remaining grounded in specific histories, sovereignties, and responsibilities.

The framework created in this project is informed by the work of Hirini Matunga, a Maori scholar, whose theory reorients planning and design disciplines toward Indigenous-led relationships with land and governance. Scholarship by Dina Gilio-Whitaker (Colville Confederated Tribes) in As Long as Grass Grows and by Damon B. Akins and William J. Bauer Jr. (Wailacki and Concow of Round Valley Indian Tribes) in We Are the Land form the decolonizing perspective by contextualizing the Indigenous-Settler relationships in the first chapter of the document. Operating from the Indigenous research paradigm as articulated by Shawn Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree Nation) in Research is Ceremony and grounded in relational accountability using conversation as method as articulated by Margaret Kovach, a scholar of Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux ancestry from Treaty Four, Saskatchewan and a member of Pasqua First Nation.

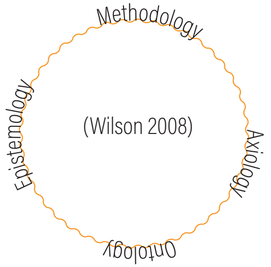
arrivant (exogenous other)

settler colonial system

indigenous/autochthonous - sovereign flows

*these are not homogenous categories or definitive terms - there is constant interaction, tension, collaboration and contamination within and between them

"The conversational method aligns with an Indigenous worldview that honours orality as a means of transmitting knowledge and upholds the relational, which is necessary to maintain a collectivist tradition. Story is a relational process that is accompanied by a particular protocol consistent with tribal knowledge identified as guiding the research" (Kovach 2019).



The entire circle is an Indigenous research paradigm. Its entities are inseparable and blend from one into the next. The whole of the paradigm is greater than the sum of its parts. That is another distinction between this paradigm as compared to western paradigms which scientists and philosophers can dissect with ease. Relationality sums up the whole Indigenous research paradigm. Just as the components of the paradigm are related, the components themselves have to do with relationships. The ontology and epistemology are based upon a process of relationships that form a mutual reality. The axiology and methodology are based upon maintaining accountability to these relationships. An Indigenous research paradigm is relational and maintains relational accountability.

Wilson, S. (2008). Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods. Fernwood Publishing

ii.

Process

Operating from the **Indigenous Paradigm**

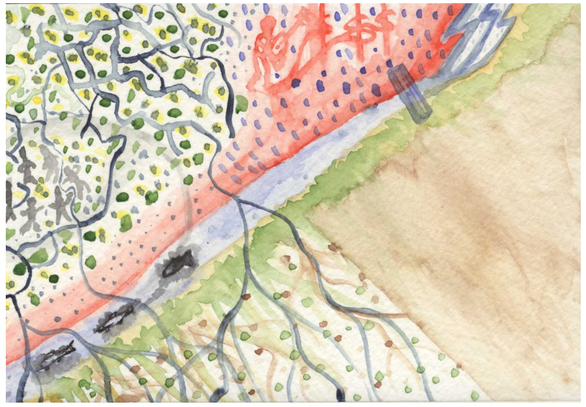
Applying shared **Indigenous Methodology -** Through listening and a relational approach

Centering **Indigenous Knowledge** (*Kovach, M. (2019). Conversational Method in Indigenous Research)*

within which **Decolonizing** perspective remains necessary and is used as **theoretical positioning** to focus on **Indigenous - Settler** relationships

Grounding the role of **Landscape Architects** on **Indigenous lands** through **Matunga's** theory

(Matunga, H. (2013). 1 Theorizing Indigenous Planning. In R. Walker, T. Jojola & D. Natcher (Ed.), Reclaiming Indigenous Planning (pp. 26-48))



ii.
Overview

As an arrivant with a semi-colonized worldview which was developed through a deep entrenchment and conditioning in the colonial systems - I am here in search of means to articulate my experience through conversations with indigenous, settler and other arrivant educators working towards decolonizing our minds and through that, the systems that we affect. It is an active process that requires constant questioning, reframing and re-positioning in order to not fall prey to enabling a system that has mastered co-optation, appeasement and speedy surface treatment of issues - especially in the realm of landscape architecture (parks) which is the focus of this study. It is made explicit through several examples while establishing the decolonizing perspective that focuses on the indigenous settler relationship in the introductory chapter. Then a brief history of the Klamath river and Kikacéki is constructed to orient the reader to the place and the conditions of the landscape that have been severely impacted by settler systems. In the third section, through listening as a method to inform planning and design - proposals are made for Sami Jo Difuntorum's ask (Cultural Preservation Officer, Shasta Indian Nation) - using Sarmento's Shasta language document to situate the eco-cultural linkages of the watershed. Due to a pause in the conversation with Sami, the designs are not definitive but work as a starting point to repair the relationship through a sustained effort to understand the futurity that the nation imagines and aims to work towards. In the final section, through Matunga's theory, there is an attempt to orient landscape architects working in indigenous spaces. The framework derived from Matunga's theory is situated in Kikaceki to analyze the relationship between Shasta Indian Nation and GreenWorks (landscape architecture practice based in Portland, OR) and see how rethinking outcome aims transform the design process.

iii.
Terminology

Decolonization

In this project, decolonization is understood as a material and political process. Following Tuck and Yang, decolonization requires the return of land and authority to Indigenous nations rather than symbolic recognition or inclusion (Tuck & Yang, 2012). While the term is often used broadly to describe social or cultural change, its use here is limited to contexts where land return, governance transfer, and structural shifts are central.

Land Return

Land return refers to the material transfer of land and decision-making authority back to Indigenous governance. In the Klamath context, land return is exemplified by the transfer of Parcel B to the Shasta Indian Nation following dam removal. Land return is not remediation or mitigation; it constitutes a change in who governs land–water relations (Office of Governor Gavin Newsom, 2024; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Relationship Restoration

Relationship restoration describes the renewal of ongoing relationships between people, land, water, ceremony, and governance, rather than the restoration of habitat or scenery alone. Drawing from Indigenous water justice and eco-cultural revitalization scholarship, relationship restoration prioritizes ceremonial access and cultural continuity over ecological metrics or recreational amenities (Diver et al., 2024).

Settler Environmentalism

Settler environmentalism refers to conservation and preservation frameworks that rely on Indigenous removal to produce the illusion of untouched wilderness. Gilio-Whitaker demonstrates that U.S. parks and conservation landscapes were built through Indigenous erasure, framing absence as ecological purity (Gilio-Whitaker, 2019).

Recreation

Within this project, recreation is understood not as a neutral land use but as a governing framework that often overwrites Indigenous presence. Recreation operates as a contemporary mechanism of dispossession when it prioritizes public access over Indigenous ceremony and governance (Akins & Bauer, 2021).

Traditional Cultural Property (TCP)

A Traditional Cultural Property is a place eligible for recognition due to its ongoing cultural, ceremonial, and historical significance to an Indigenous community. TCPs are defined by living relationships and practices, not solely by physical artifacts or past use. Kikacéki functions as a TCP within the Klamath Cultural Riverscape despite a century of inundation (Akins & Bauer, 2021; KRRC, 2021).

Fire as Governance (Cultural Fire)

Cultural fire is understood as a system of governance that organizes ecological health, ceremony, seasonal timing, and collective responsibility. Fire is not a management tool or hazard, but a relational practice embedded in Indigenous law and knowledge systems. Fire suppression represents a direct disruption of Indigenous governance (Yurok Tribe, n.d.; Susskind et al.).

Language as Relational Knowledge

Shasta language is understood as a relational system that encodes movement, obligation, hydrology, and place memory rather than static labels. Sarmento's documentation shows that language functions as an epistemic tool shaped by the watershed itself, informing how land is known and engaged (Sarmento, 2021).

Settler Colonialism

"...[S]ettler colonialism refers to complex social processes in which at least one society seeks to move permanently onto the terrestrial, aquatic, and aerial places lived in by one or more other societies who already derive economic vitality, cultural flourishing, and political self-determination from the relationships they have established with the plants, animals, physical entities, and ecosystems of those places" (Whyte, 2018, pp. 137)

Landscape Architecture

Landscape architecture is understood here as a practice concerned with the relationships between people, land, water, ecology, infrastructure, and culture. However, this project acknowledges that the discipline emerged and developed largely within settler colonial contexts, often prioritizing recreation, visual order, environmental management, and territorial planning while overlooking Indigenous governance systems and relationships to place.

Drawing from Hirini Matunga's critique of planning and design disciplines, landscape architecture is approached as a secondary and responsive practice rather than a primary authority over land. Within Indigenous contexts, the role of the landscape architect is not to determine futures independently but to orient their work within Indigenous governance, cultural continuity, and place-based relationships. In this project, landscape architecture is therefore framed as a practice of support, interpretation, and relationship-building that remains accountable to Indigenous leadership and the long-term continuities of land and water systems.

Adivasi and Tribe (in the Indian context)

Adivasi(autochthonous) represents a political identity fighting for recognition and land, while Tribe represents a bureaucratic classification for accessing government benefits. While all scheduled tribes (ST) are generally considered Adivasis, some communities deemed "tribal" may not identify with the term "Adivasi." Conversely, not all indigenous/autochthonous groups are formally recognized as STs.

Arrivant

(borrowing from Caribbean poet Kamau Brathwaite coined by Jodi Byrd and Judy Rohrer)

People who were forced to "arrive" in the Americas through "the violence of European and Anglo-American colonialism and imperialism around the globe." "In different colonial contexts, whether coming as slaves or as laborers, whether coming in search of (sometimes false) promises of opportunity, at the hand of extreme violence, or in anticipation of education, **arrivants** had children, created histories, and.....eventually adopted the ways of the settler state, assimilated, and rose to economic and political success." (Case 2021, pp. 86-87)

Indigenous

In this project, Indigenous refers to peoples whose relationships to specific lands and waters predate the formation of settler states and who continue to maintain cultural, political, spiritual, and territorial connections despite histories of dispossession and colonialism. Following Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Indigenous is understood not as a singular identity but as a political and relational term that emerged through shared experiences of colonization and collective struggles for self-determination.

Indigenous Research Paradigm

An Indigenous research paradigm is an approach to knowledge grounded in relationships, reciprocity, responsibility, and accountability rather than objectivity, detachment, or extraction. Drawing primarily from Margaret Kovach and Shawn Wilson, knowledge is understood as relational and situated within networks connecting people, land, waters, stories, ancestors, and future generations. Research is therefore not the collection of information about communities but participation within relationships that carry ethical responsibilities.

Within this project, the Indigenous research paradigm informs both methodology and positionality. It requires recognizing Indigenous nations as holders of authority over their knowledge, histories, and futures while positioning the researcher as accountable to the relationships that make the work possible. Listening, patience, and responsiveness are therefore treated as methodological practices rather than preliminary stages of design. The pause in engagement with the Shasta Indian Nation during the land return process is understood not as a limitation of the research but as part of working relationally within Indigenous methodologies.

č'ə́·ʔaʔ

1.0
Contextualization

Indigenous - Settler realtionships

"It is a sad and shameful fact of American history that however detente was symbolically upheld by positive, or at least tolerant, images of the indigenous people, it inevitably collapsed when the balance of power changed and Indians outlived their usefulness. Negotiation would be replaced by aggression, and the Ignoble would replace the Noble Savage to accommodate the ensuing surge westward."

- Lonnberg, Allan. "The Digger Indian Stereotype in California." Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, vol. 3, no. 2, 1981, pp. 278-283. eScholarship, University of California.

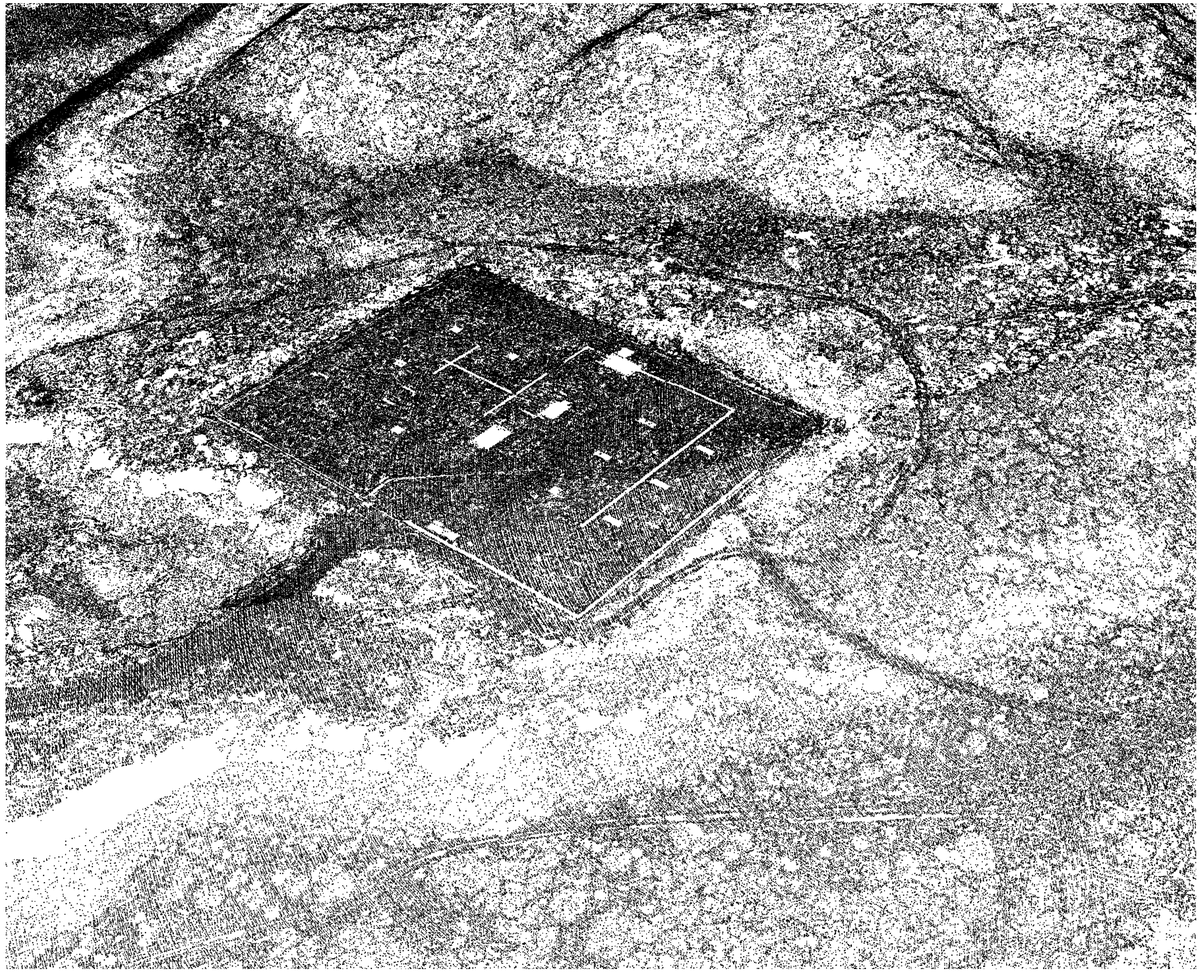


Image description: Power grid on Kikacéki

"The creation of national parks, bordered wilderness and nature reserves represents the pinnacle of settler colonialism's rush for land projects" because it suggests that the state has all the land it needs and can therefore mark its excess in the form of parks while also simultaneously setting up borders that Indigenous peoples cannot cross into for dwelling."

Case, E. (2021, pp. 104). Everything ancient was once new: Indigenous persistence from Hawai'i to Kahiki. University of Hawaii Press.

1.1 Parks, Wilderness and Indigenous Erasure

The formation of parks and conservation landscapes in the United States is inseparable from Indigenous dispossession. As Dina Gilio-Whitaker argues, "the formation of parks required Indigenous erasure to create an imagined wilderness" (Gilio-Whitaker 2019). This erasure was not merely physical: Indigenous land stewardship, governance, and presence were reframed as incompatible with conservation, while their absence was recast as ecological purity.

Landscape architecture emerged and professionalized within this ideological framework. Early park and conservation projects were informed by narratives that positioned Indigenous peoples as obstacles to environmental improvement rather than as land stewards. Writings by influential conservation figures such as John Muir and Henry David Thoreau provided intellectual justification for this worldview. Muir described Native people as living "a strangely dirty and irregular life, half-happy savages" within what he defined as a "clean wilderness" (Gilio-Whitaker 2019). Thoreau similarly asserted that Indigenous peoples "have no notion of improvement, They never advance; they never change" (Gilio-Whitaker 2019). These accounts framed Indigenous presence as antithetical to progress and reinforced the notion that land required removal of Indigenous inhabitants to achieve environmental or scenic value.

Within landscape architecture, these assumptions translated into design priorities that privileged scenery, leisure, and visual order while rendering Indigenous relationships to land invisible. Parks became spaces where settler society could experience nature without confronting the histories of displacement that made such experiences possible. This legacy persists in contemporary practice, where recreation and public access are often treated as self-evident goods, rarely interrogated as mechanisms of ongoing erasure.

Image description:
(Ohlone) ***Corrina Gould*** *is the tribal spokesperson for the Confederated Villages of Lisjan. Born and raised in her ancestral homeland, the territory of Huchiun, she is the mother of three and grandmother of four. Corrina has worked on preserving and protecting the sacred burial sites of her ancestors throughout the Bay Area for decades.*

https://sogoreate-landtrust.org/staff-board/#:~:text=Corrina%20Gould&text=Born%20and%20raised%20in%20the,the%20Bay%20Area%20for%20decades. https://img.huffingtonpost.com/asset/5ab29dc72000002d00eb287a.jpeg?cache=1pApMga4eK&ops=scalefit_2560&format=webp

1.2 The Ongoing Violence of Parks

The continued framing of recreation as a neutral or benevolent land use obscures its role in perpetuating Indigenous dispossession. A clear example is the attempted conversion of Sogorea Te, an Ohlone burial ground in the San Francisco Bay Area, into a public park. Ohlone leader Corrina Gould describes Sogorea Te as "one of the last burial grounds where we can touch our feet to the ground and say our prayers the way we're supposed to" (Akins and Bauer 2021). Despite its ongoing ceremonial significance, municipal planning processes treated the site as vacant land suitable for recreational development.

The proposed park at Sogorea Te reveals how recreation functions as a form of structural violence. By prioritizing public access and leisure over Indigenous ceremony and governance, recreational planning reproduces the same logics that underpinned earlier removals. Indigenous land is framed as underutilized unless activated for public enjoyment, while Indigenous presence is treated as an obstacle to inclusive design rather than its foundation.

The large telescopes (TMT) along with a cultural center for appeasement at the Mauna Kea in Hawaii is another example of the nation state using their muscle to access spaces that are considered sacred by the Kanaka Maoli. The kia'i were against all construction at the upper levels of the Mauna Kea (including the cultural center), which was considered the realm of Gods, but settlers emptied it of its spiritual value, "...ascribing it with new state imposed significance as a scientific hub for exploration" (Case 2021, pp. 104).

The ancient village of Pågat in Guam, one of the eleven most endangered archeological site with deep cultural, historical and spiritual significance was proposed for a live firing training complex by the U.S Department of Defence - showing colonial power taking priority over environmental protection, cultural significance and indigenous well being. Craig Santos Perez calles this "the logic of military conservation", where if the military wants to use the land, it can simply be converted if it is under federal control as opposed to public/indigenous trust (Case 2021, pp. 105).

These examples demonstrate that the violence of parks and recreation is not confined to the nineteenth century. It persists through contemporary planning, design, and policy frameworks that continue to privilege settler use and interpretation of land. Landscape architecture, as a discipline deeply embedded in these frameworks, must therefore confront its complicity in sustaining park design focused on recreation paradigms that overwrite Indigenous sovereignty.

"To be a person of direct Indigenous descent in the US today is to have survived a genocide of cataclysmic proportions. Some Native people have described the experience of living in today's world as postapocalyptic. Based on sheer numbers, if we assume an estimate of eighteen million Indigenous people on the continent north of Mesoamerica in 1492 and compare that number to the Native American population count of roughly 228,000 in the 1890 census- the nadir of the Native American population-we see a population decline of approximately 99 percent." (Gilio-Whitaker 2019, 33–34)

- Gilio-Whitaker, Dina. As Long as Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice, from Colonization to Standing Rock. Beacon Press, 2019.

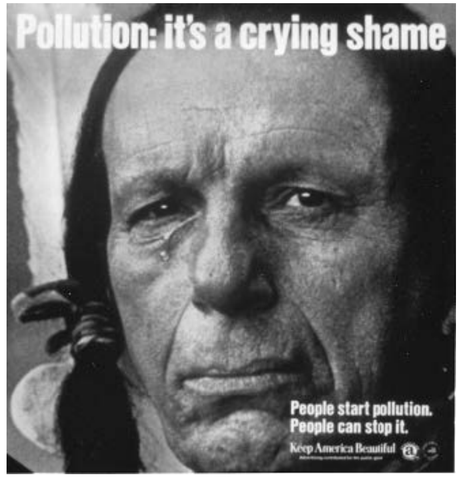


Image description: Espera Oscar de Corti, Iron Eyes Cody built a career off portraying Native characters in Hollywood Westerns and also presented himself as Native in his real life

https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSZGjazpuSZGm--f0iIXu79RHluQcPFMPxbxw&s

1.3 Settler Environmentalism and its Projection through Media

Settler environmentalism refers to conservation and preservation frameworks that rely on Indigenous removal to produce the illusion of untouched wilderness. Within landscape architecture, settler environmentalism shaped disciplinary priorities around access, leisure, and visual coherence. Design knowledge centered scenic preservation while Indigenous land stewardship systems—fire regimes, seasonal movement, cultivation practices—were rendered invisible or pre-modern. Indigenous presence became framed as incompatible with conservation, except as cultural artifact or symbolic trace. These assumptions persist in contemporary frameworks that foreground recreation and public use while leaving unexamined the histories of dispossession that structured those landscapes into "public" space in the first place.

Media amplified and normalized this ideological structure. The 1971 "Crying Indian" public service announcement—produced by Keep America Beautiful—featured an Italian American actor in staged regalia shedding a single tear over roadside litter. The advertisement transformed Indigenous identity into a moral symbol for environmental decline. As Gilio-Whitaker notes, the image weaponized purity: Indigenous people were measured against impossible standards of ecological virtue while the extractive systems responsible for land degradation remained unnamed. "This closeness to nature can also result in what others have called "eco-incarceration", or the binding of people to place while also restricting their movement (implying that movement away from place will make someone less connected and therefore less indigenous) (Case 2021, pp. 23).

Indigenous ecological knowledge was reframed as performance rather than governance, sentiment rather than sovereignty. Indigenous peoples were positioned as symbols of environmental grief rather than as political nations with land-based authority. Such imagery continues to shape how society—and by extension, design professions—expect Indigenous peoples to "fit" into landscapes: as aesthetic signifiers of harmony, not as sovereign actors with jurisdiction and futurity. This is the "catch-22 of indigeneity" where "the more modern or global indigeneity is seen as being, the more its authenticity as an identity is questioned" (Case 2021, pp. 75).

Image description: Photograph of an old painting depicting the dam and powerhouse at Kikaceki. Photographed at the Shasta Indian Nation office.

1.4 Dams, Cultural Genocide, and Histories of Displacement

Infrastructure development, particularly dam construction, has played a central role in the disruption of Indigenous lifeways across North America. Gilio-Whitaker describes the dam-building era as "one seldom-mentioned aspect of the U.S. cultural genocide against Indigenous peoples," noting that "there is no tribal nation that has not suffered devastating cultural impacts from the extensive damming of rivers" (Gilio-Whitaker, pp. 61–62). On the Klamath River, dam construction led to the near extinction of salmon runs and the interruption of fishing-based traditions for the Yurok, Karuk, Winnemum Wintu, Shasta, and other tribes. As Diver et al. (2024) document, these impacts extended beyond subsistence, affecting ceremony, governance, and intergenerational knowledge transmission — collapsing relationships that had structured life in the basin for thousands of years (p. 3). The removal of dams does not automatically resolve these harms. Without addressing the cultural and relational disruptions caused by inundation, post-dam landscapes risk reproducing extractive and recreational logics under the guise of restoration.

The ideological framework that made dam construction legible as progress drew on a particular way of knowing rivers. Commissioned by the Bonneville Power Administration, Woody Guthrie's Columbia River Collection (1941) expressed this vision - "river, while you're rambling, you can do some work for me." The Columbia — and by extension every river in the Pacific Northwest — was framed as latent productivity waiting to be captured, its energy belonging rightfully to those who could harness it. This was not merely promotional rhetoric. It reflected a deeper reorganization of what rivers were understood to be.

Richard White's The Organic Machine (1995) traces how this reorganization operated materially and epistemologically on the Columbia. The river became kilowatts; labor became man-hours; life itself was reduced to statistical output — "22 million yards of earth excavated... 10.5 million board feet of heavy timbers... and 77 dead" (White, 1995, pp. 62–63). Workers were depersonalized into units of production, and salmon were reimagined not as relations within an Indigenous world but as measurable biological resources to be managed alongside electricity generation. The dam, in White's analysis, did not simply alter the river — it reorganized the terms through which the river, the worker, and the salmon were known, privileging abstraction over relation and production over responsibility.

This is what Lewis Mumford identified as the logic of the megamachine: a system that prioritizes scale, efficiency, and the projection of centralized power, and that derives its legitimacy from the visibility of quantification. Numbers — yards excavated, board feet laid, kilowatts produced — generated an appearance of accountability while rendering invisible the cultural and spiritual relationships that were not being recorded. The dam claimed the river by making it legible in terms that excluded Indigenous governance entirely. Settler infrastructure did not simply occupy land and water; it replaced one epistemology with another, substituting relational accountability with metric control.

White, R. (1995). The organic machine: The remaking of the Columbia River. Hill and Wang.

1.5 Decolonization, Sovereignty, and the Recreation Centric Focus of Landscape Architecture

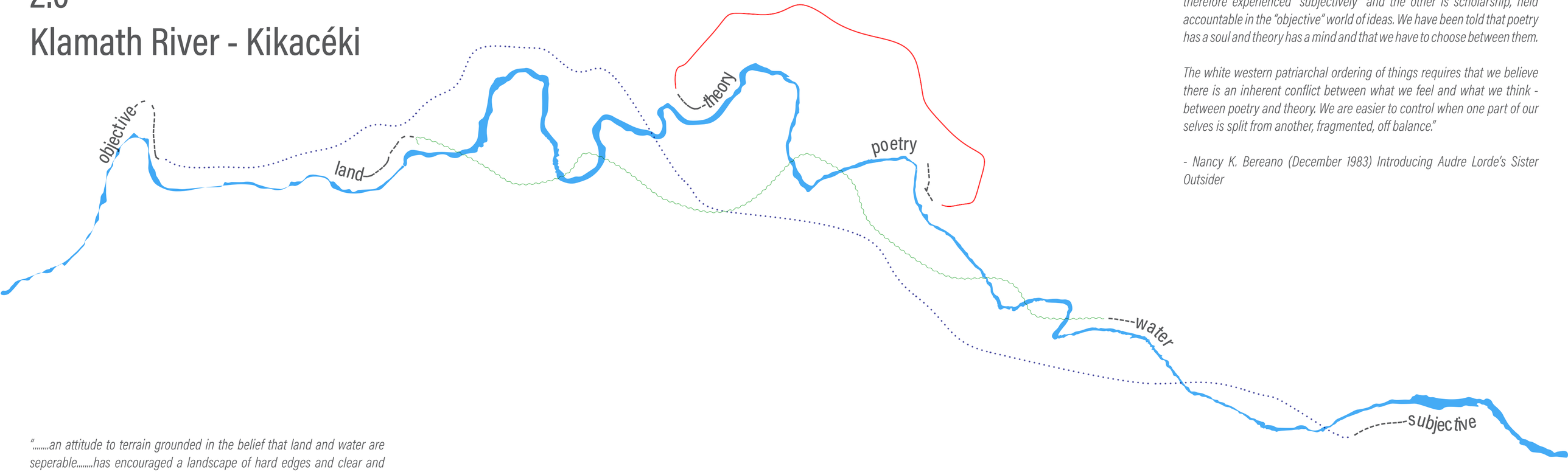
Decolonization requires more than acknowledgment or inclusion. Tuck and Yang (Scholars of Ethnic Studies, Critical Race and Indigenous Studies) argue that decolonization must involve material land return and the transfer of authority, cautioning against approaches that substitute recognition for structural change (Tuck and Yang 2012). Despite increasing recognition of Indigenous sovereignty and leadership in environmental governance, spatial design of restored landscapes remains largely controlled by non-Indigenous professionals. In the context of dam removal, Indigenous nations often lead advocacy, litigation, and governance negotiations, yet consultants and designers continue to shape the spatial outcomes of 'post-dam' landscapes.

This disconnect reveals a structural limitation within landscape architecture: Indigenous leadership is frequently acknowledged rhetorically while being constrained procedurally. Consultation, advisory committees, and cultural reviews are treated as sufficient engagement, even as design authorship, programmatic priorities, and spatial logics remain grounded in settler frameworks of access, visibility, and recreation.

The absence, therefore, is not Indigenous knowledge or vision, but Indigenous-led spatial design frameworks that allow ceremonial practices, governance structures, and everyday land use to determine form, sequence, and materiality. Without such frameworks, design risks reproducing conservation aesthetics that prioritize scenic experience and public amenity over cultural continuity and sovereignty.

At Kikacéki, the cultural landscape of the Shasta Indian Nation which is the focus of this project - this limitation is especially consequential. The return of Parcel B lands (outlined in chapter 2.3) to Shasta governance creates the conditions for Indigenous authorship of land–water relations. However, without an intentional shift in design practice, landscape designers may default to recreation and amenity first programming that marginalizes ceremonial access and relational use, as seen on Greenworks' articulation of their involvement with the Lower Klamath Sites which is analyzed in final chapter of this document.

2.0
Klamath River - Kikacéki



".....an attitude to terrain grounded in the belief that land and water are seperable.....has encouraged a landscape of hard edges and clear and distinct entities, and fostered a spirit predisposed to privileging land over water, firmly held property lines over open terrains, defined land uses over fluid occupancies." (Mathur and da Cunha 2009, pp. 4)

- Mathur, Anuradha, and Dilip da Cunha. SOAK: Mumbai in an Estuary. Rupa & Co., 2009.

"We have been told that poetry expresses what we feel, and theory states what we know; that the poet creates out of the heat of the moment, while the theorist's mode is, of necessity, cool and reasoned; that one is art and therefore experienced "subjectively" and the other is scholarship, held accountable in the "objective" world of ideas. We have been told that poetry has a soul and theory has a mind and that we have to choose between them.

The white western patriarchal ordering of things requires that we believe there is an inherent conflict between what we feel and what we think - between poetry and theory. We are easier to control when one part of our selves is split from another, fragmented, off balance."

- Nancy K. Bereano (December 1983) Introducing Audre Lorde's Sister Outsider

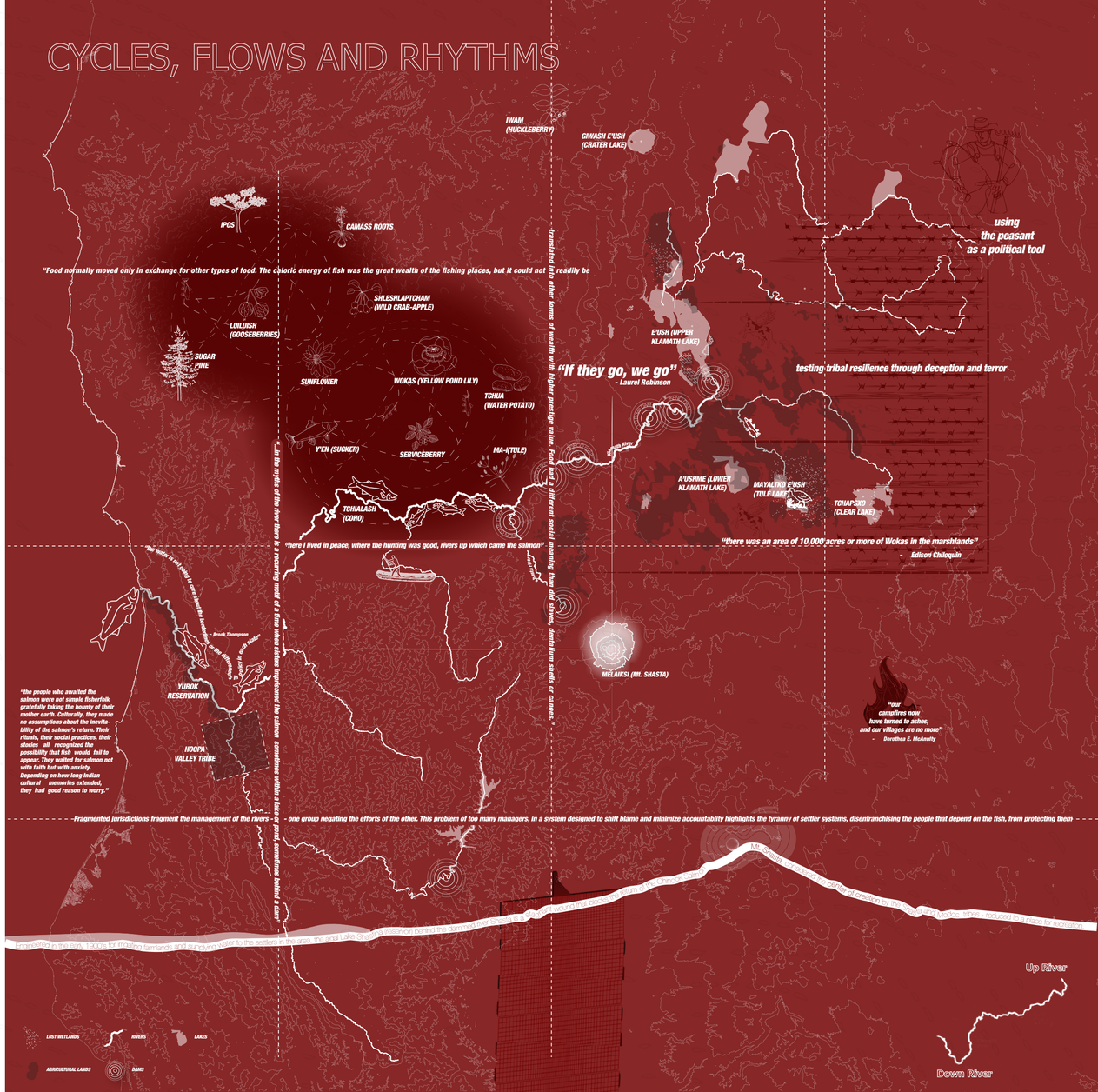
Klamath Watershed

(Southern Oregon - Northern California)

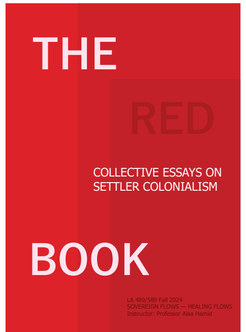
The Klamath River watershed spans 12,000 square miles, running from the high desert plateau of south-central Oregon down through the Cascade and Klamath mountain ranges to the Pacific coast of northern California. The river and its tributaries have sustained some of the most biologically diverse and culturally significant landscapes on the continent — home to the Karuk Tribe, Yurok Tribe, Shasta Indian Nation, Klamath Tribes, Hoopa Valley Tribe, and others whose governance, language, and lifeways developed through sustained relationship with the watershed over millennia. The upper Klamath moves through the ancestral territory of the Shasta Indian Nation near Hornbrook in northern California — a stretch of river dramatically altered by the construction of four hydroelectric dams between 1922 and 1964, and now being transformed again as those dams come down in the largest dam removal project in American history. As the reservoir drains and 2,800 acres are returned to the Shasta Indian Nation, a place called Kikacéki is re-emerging.

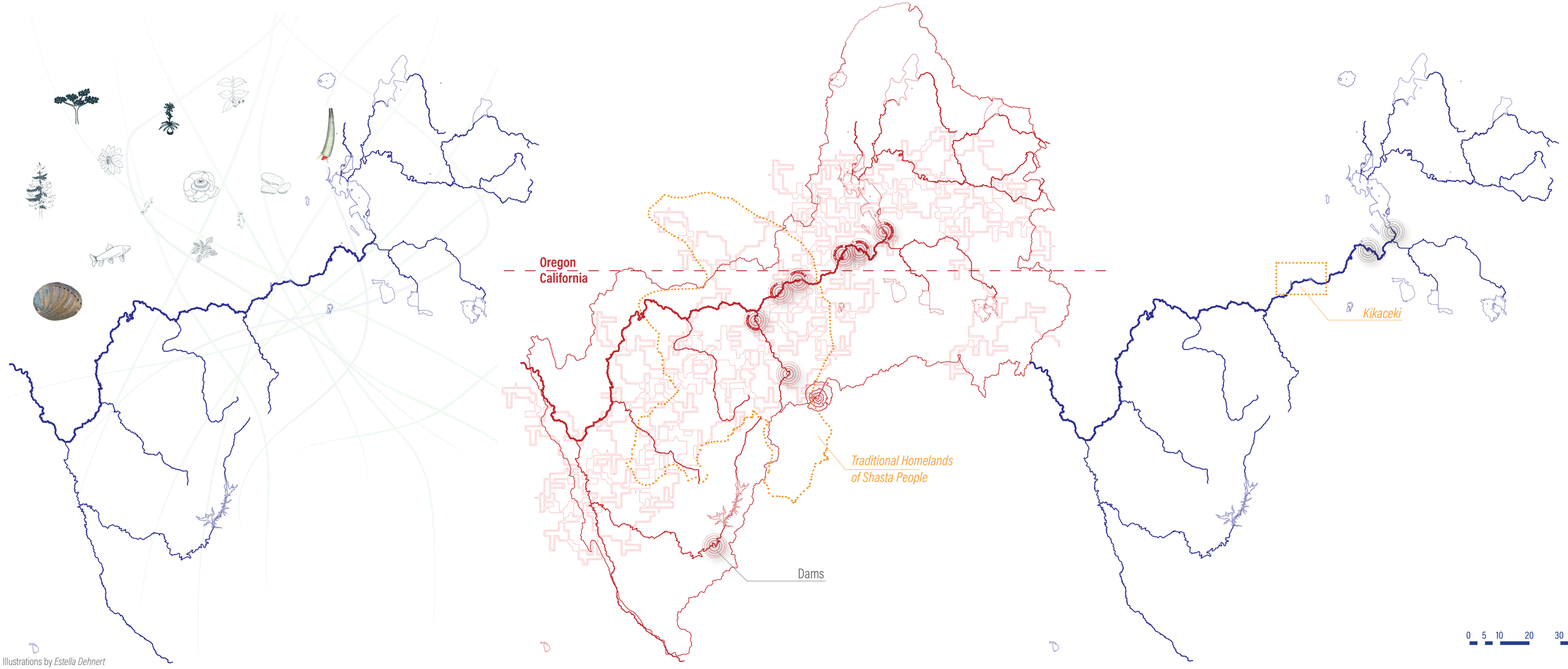
Kikacéki: The Shasta and the COPCO Dams

Kikacéki sits at the confluence of the Klamath River canyon and the ancestral territory of the Shasta Indian Nation — a place whose name, whose geology, and whose ecological relationships encode thousands of years of sustained inhabitation. The construction of the COPCO Dam in 1922 did not simply alter the landscape. It submerged it — covering cultural sites, disrupting salmon and lamprey passage, severing the material and ceremonial relationships through which the Shasta people had governed and tended this place across generations. The land was taken without consultation and without treaty. As Shasta Cultural Preservation Officer Sami Jo Difuntorum describes the community's condition: "We're not homeless or houseless, but we're away from home" (as cited in Juliet Grable's OPB article, 2023). The draining of the COPCO reservoir and the return of Parcel B is the beginning of the journey back — and it is this moment, and this place, that this project is situated within.



The Red Book - Collective Essays on Settler Colonialism, Chapter Unmapping the Klamath Basin: Settler Colonial Impacts on Health of Land and People, Oregon Sequence Studio publication directed by Alaa Hamid





Illustrations by *Estella Dehnert*

1864 - Klamath Tribes of Oregon sign Treaty that includes salmon fishing rights.

1918 - Copco 1 Dam becomes operational, salmon runs cut off from the Upper Klamath Basin.

1925 - Copco 2 Dam becomes operational.

1958 - Big Bend Dam – later known as J.C. Boyle Dam – is completed.

1962 - Iron Gate Dam completed.

1978 - "On August 28, 1978, just before the bulk of the fall chinook salmon run was expected to enter the estuary of the Klamath river, the federal government put a moratorium on all Indian fishing in the lower Klamath river, a complete ban on Indian fishing. Now no fishing was allowed. There was no hardship clause or appeal process. **Conservation problems** was stated as the basis of the regulation. Just as the state had done in 1933, now the federal government had criminalized our identity and way of life. While the notice of the regulation in the federal register stated that California was considering a similar ban on offshore commercial fihsing, California never issued commercial offshore fishing restrictions. In fact, it expanded fishing operations in 1978." (Cordalis 2025, pp. 139)

1981 - The Klamath River was designated a **Recreational River** within the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System.

1983 - U.S. v. Adair upholds Klamath Tribes of Oregon's right to enough in-stream water to support fishing and hunting on former reservation lands, but does not quantify the amount of water.

1997 - Coho salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act.

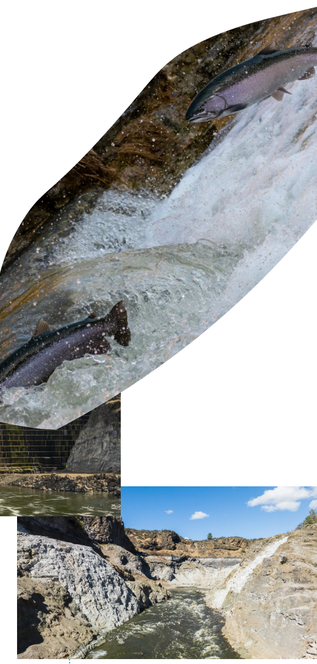
2000 - PacifiCorp begins federal relicensing process for the Klamath Hydroelectric Project Dams

2001-02 - Federal Water Management Decisions Lead to the Deaths of 70,000 Adult Salmon. The Klamath Basin experienced a severe drought in 2001-2002. Federal water management decision to curtail irrigation diversions to protect fisheries was reversed. As a result, farmers diverted more water from the Klamath than was recommended by federal scientists. As many as **68,000 salmon die** before spawning in the lower Klamath River due to low flows.

2023 - Copco 2 Diversion Dam Removed

JANUARY 2024 - Drawdown initiated for COPCO No. 1, Iron Gate, and J.C. Boyle dams. Native seed replantings begin in the footprint of former reservoirs.

Fall 2024 - SALMON COMING HOME
The last bits of dam were removed from the river on October 2, and on October 3 at 10:06 pm, sonar equipment set up in the river to monitor returning fish had recorded the first Chinook salmon moving upstream above the site of the former dams for the first time in 100 years!



Summer 2024 - The mainstem Klamath River — from the base of Upper Klamath Lake to the ocean — is running free for the first time in a century! On August 28, 2024, the last cofferdams were broken at the former Iron Gate and Copco No. 1 dam sites, returning the river to its natural path and marking an end to a significant construction phase in the largest salmon restoration project in U.S. history.

Image description: Process based restoration of the Klamath at Kikaceki

Kikacéki—once drowned under the Copco reservoir—is now emerging. The river is reshaping itself, reorganizing sediment, revealing floodplains.
Dam removal did not simply "revive an ecosystem"—it reopened a cultural world.
As the Recasting Klamath report notes,".....following the Elwha River dam removal in Washington.....cultural practitioners are hopeful about Klamath dam removal outcomes that lead to the successful regeneration of eco-cultural linkages." (Diver et al., 2024)

Diver, Sibyl, et al. "Recasting Klamath Dam Removal as Eco-Cultural Revitalization and Restorative Justice through Karuk Tribal Leadership." Water, vol. 16, no. 16, Aug. 2024, p. 2295. DOI.org (Crossref), https://doi.org/10.3390/w16162295.

Before dam removal

The COPCO reservoir — once a flatwater recreation destination created by damming the Klamath River — submerged Kikacéki and blocked salmon passage for over a century. It is now drained. The salmon have returned. The Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) has engaged Kiewit as contractor, Knight Piésold as prime engineer, and Resource Environmental Solutions (RES) as restoration designer to meet the conditions of the dam removal surrender license and transfer the lands to the Shasta Indian Nation (KRRC, 2022).

Klamath River Renewal Corporation. (2022, May). Lower Klamath Project: Historic Properties Management Plan [HPMP]. https://klamathrenewal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/20220502-5171_KRRC-HPMP-May2022-Public.pdf

Kikacéki *(Present condition)*

0 1,000' 2,000'

how this project does not frame dam removal

This project is not an objective or neutral cost–benefit analysis of dam removal.

It is not evaluating dams only through engineering, infrastructure, or management frameworks.

It does not reduce rivers to measurable ecological units such as fish counts, habitat areas, or water quality metrics alone.

It does not frame restoration as simply improving efficiency, connectivity, or recreation access.

It does not treat ecological disruption as technical mitigation issue

It does not assume that alternative habitats created by dams can substitute Wrelational river systems.

It does not romanticize a return to a pristine pre-dam condition.

It does not separate ecology from Indigenous histories, cultural practices, and systems of relationship.

how this project frames dam removal

The project examines dams as disruptions of relational ecologies.

It studies how dams fragment relationships between water, sediment, fish, nutrients, landscapes, and communities.

It situates dams within an Indigenous–settler framework rather than only an environmental management framework.

It understands rivers as living systems of movement, reciprocity, and connection — not simply hydraulic infrastructure.

It critiques how ecological management often translates relational loss into measurable impacts and technical trade-offs.

It reframes restoration from “habitat recovery” toward the reopening of ecological and cultural relationships.

It argues that dam removal is not a return to the past, but a partial reactivation of suppressed connections and processes over time.

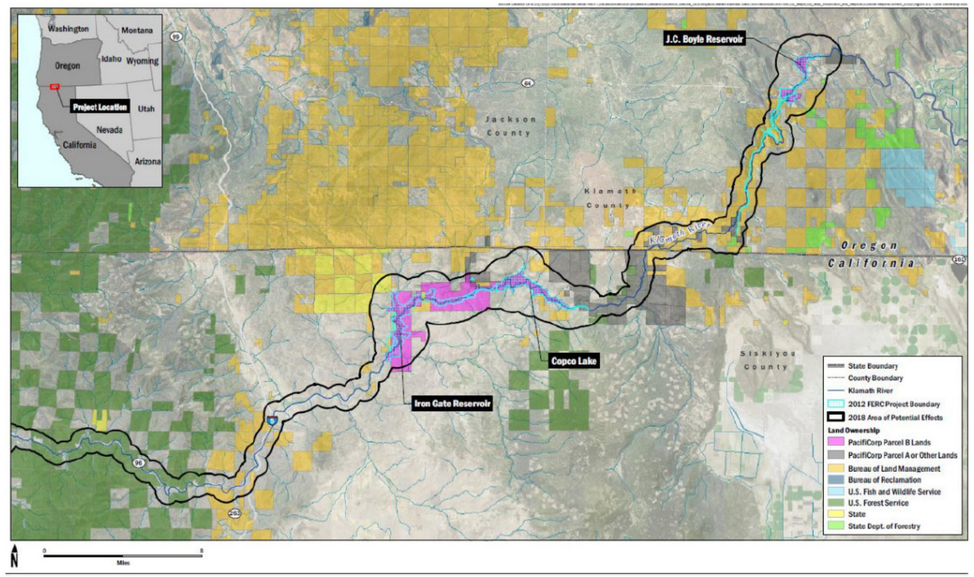


Figure 2-2 Map depicting land ownership, including Parcel B lands

Parcel B lands: Project lands subject to transfer by the Renewal Corporation to the states or to a designated third-party designee once Renewal Corporation has met all surrender license conditions.

Kikacéki is situated within the Klamath Cultural Riverscape, a complex network of villages, ceremonial sites, ecological relations, and hydrological processes shaped through Indigenous governance over millennia. The site cannot be understood as a discrete parcel or post-industrial landscape; it is embedded within a broader cultural and ecological system that was disrupted by dam infrastructure.

In June 2026, Parcel B—including the former reservoir, the powerhouse, and the surrounding lands—will return to the Shasta Indian Nation. This is a governance shift. A responsibility shift.

Language is the thread that connects history, water, fire, land return — into a single system.

Image description: Process based restoration of the Klamath at Kikaceki, photograph by author

At Kikaceki, language is not a label applied to the landscape from outside. It is a system of knowledge generated through sustained inhabitation — encoding movement, ecological process, obligation, and relational memory in forms that cannot be separated from the places they describe.

Sarmento's (2021) doctoral research on the Shasta language demonstrates this directly through the placename record near what is now Copco Lake — the former reservoir that once submerged Kikaceki. The Shasta name for the Klamath River itself, *wá·sur?áka·*, translates as "stream running downstream" — not a label but a description of process, of water in motion (Sarmento, 2021, p. 118). The surrounding placenames follow the same logic: *?á·sú·rahá·wa?*, the name for Shovel Creek and the settlement at Beswick, translates as "going downstream"; *?áp·ahaw*, Bogus Mountain, as "you're throwing something out" (Sarmento, 2021, p. 118). Place in the Shasta language is not a fixed coordinate. It is a moment in a process — something observed, moved through, acted upon. The landscape was named through the experience of living within it.

Directional vocabulary in the Shasta language further reflects this orientation. The language maintains distinct terms for upstream and downstream across different hydrological contexts: *?úkwa·tú?* for upstream on a river, *?úkwahurú?* for upstream on a creek, *úru·tú?* for downstream on a river, *wahá·wa?* for downstream on a creek (Sarmento, 2021, p. 131). Spatial orientation is organized not by abstract compass directions but by the logic of water flow. To know where you are is to know how water moves around you.

This is visible in the autobiographical narrative of *Ík?ya·hámpik* — Sargent Sambo — one of the last fluent speakers of the Shasta language, whose testimonies form the core of Sarmento's (2021) research. In recounting his earliest memory, *Ík?ya·hámpik* locates himself precisely: "We were living there at *?isú·?i* on the downstream side up the river from where I was born" (Sambo, as cited in Sarmento, 2021, p. 34). Identity, memory, and place are expressed together through a single hydrological orientation. The river is not backdrop; it is the coordinate system through which a life is situated and told.

The same placenames that encode this knowledge were carried to Copco Lake during the Shasta Culture Days visit documented by Sarmento (2021). For the Shasta community, these locations were "related directly to places where their ancestors had lived, had been buried, or had been displaced from" — places whose Shasta names had survived in archival recordings even as the community became "increasingly displaced from them through time" (Sarmento, 2021, p. 118). When the reservoir was filled, it did not simply inundate land. It severed the continuity between place, name, story, and the people for whom those connections constituted knowledge. Sarmento's hope in returning the placenames to the community was to "help them make connections between their lives and the language, connections that had previously been severed" (2021, p. 118).

The draining of the COPCO reservoir and the return of Parcel B to the Shasta Indian Nation reopens the possibility of those connections. As the land re-emerges, so do the conditions under which language, story, and place can be re-encountered together. For the landscape architect working at Kikaceki, this is not incidental context. It means that the watershed already has a vocabulary — one organized around movement, water, seasonal obligation, and relational memory — and that the role of design is to work within that vocabulary rather than replace it with new systems of naming and knowing.

Sarmento, J. D. (2021). The Shasta language: A one-hundred year conversation [Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Davis]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

"After this stop we proceeded to visit ʔwita·ha·wá, the 'ridge that runs back into the mountain that you could go into the lower part of.' This lower part was a rock cave known as ʔíc·aʔ ʔám·a·.(60) In the winter of 1853-1854, Tyee Bill, headman of the Shasta band who lived along the Klamath River in the vicinity of present-day Hornbrook, had overwintered with his band in the cave, and they were attacked by vigilantes who had solicited assistance from U.S. Army troops at Fort Jones. However, the U.S. Army assisted Tyee Bill's band instead (Daniels, 2003; Heizer & Hester, 1970, pp. 148 - 150). Many of the families attending Shasta Culture Days had family members present during the events in the 1850s but few knew the historical details. This moment bound the individuals together, creating a new space—and opportunity—to reinvigorate the tribal community. Most had not heard the two place names spoken out loud prior to the visit, let alone any other Shasta language. I left the day energized. It was the first time that I had an extended engagement with a Shasta community about the language." (Sarmento, 2021, pp. 118-119)

60 Literally translates to 'rock house': ʔíc·aʔ - rock; ʔám·a· - house

Sarmento, J. D. (2021). The Shasta language: A one-hundred year conversation [Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Davis]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

Sarmento's linguistic work shows how Shasta spatial concepts define place through movement, relation and story. In the shared passage from Sarmento's book, the term for cave in Shasta language translates to rock house - showing the difference that language makes in the perception of place/space. The cave becomes a house/home and is a place within the homelands where people might live/rest. If seen only through the colonial lens and language, the cave would become a space fit for recreation/tourism. Sami shared the story of vandalism and violence that occured in one of the caves. It reveals how the perception of the word cave when detached from its relational connection as a house that was seasonally used by the people - becomes a mere geological feature which may be protected/preserved for tourism or vandalized to express the freedom of access, without understanding that it is someone's home.

Dr. Sarmento currently works as the Executive Director of Cultural Resources for the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians. His research focuses on California Indian Language Reclamation, specifically with the Shasta language, California archaeology and archaeological field methods as they pertain to Cultural Resource Management within California, and the digital archiving of linguistic and cultural data.

https://www.nativeartsandcultures.org/ayuthea-lapier

At Kikaceki, the return of Parcel B to the Shasta Indian Nation creates the conditions for that system of obligation to resume. For landscape architects working at this site, fire cannot be approached as a hazard to mitigate or a technique to apply. It must be understood as a practice that belongs to the Shasta Indian Nation — one through which specific relationships with specific plants, animals, and places are maintained across generations. The role of the designer is not to manage fire, but to understand the governance it expresses, and to ensure that nothing in the designed landscape forecloses the conditions under which it can return.

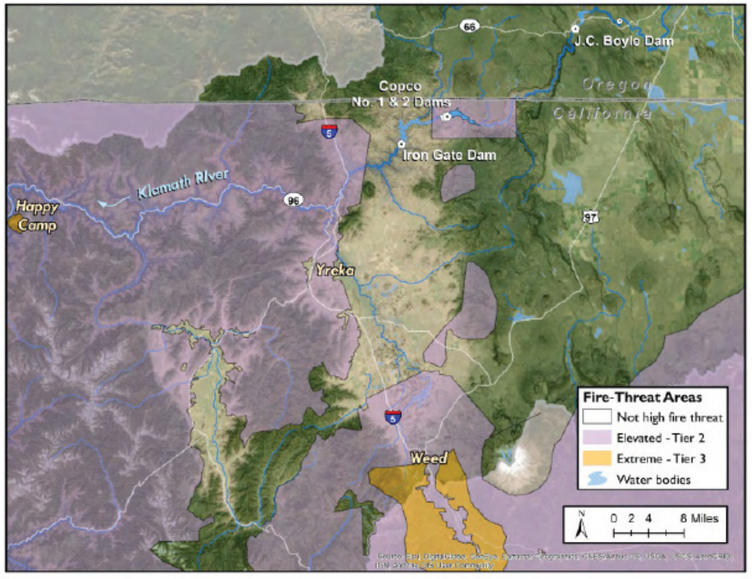


Image description: Fire threat map by Klamath River Renewal Corporation

At Kikaceki, fire is not fuel management. It is law, timing, and ceremony — a governance system embedded in the landscape that the Shasta Indian Nation is returning to steward.

To understand what that means in practice, the scholarship of neighboring nations on the same river offers the closest available grounding. Among the Karuk — whose aboriginal territory lies downriver from Kikaceki along the mid-Klamath — cultural burning has been documented as a spatially and temporally precise practice organized around sustained relationships with specific plants, animals, and places. Burning hazel stands in early spring or fall produced the straight, pliable shoots required for basketweaving — as Wilverna Reece (Karuk) describes, "fires for hazel were most commonly set in the late fall, although the time of burning could be changed so that stems would be the desired size for weaving" (as cited in Greenler et al., 2024, p. 8). Tanoak groves were burned every three to seven years, primarily in fall, to facilitate acorn gathering and reduce insect infestations — Craig Erwin (Yurok) connecting the absence of fire directly to ecological collapse: "the acorn gathering ground, it had to be burned, but it was a slow fire... And that kept the disease down. Now we don't have acorns hardly... There's so much of this worm" (as cited in Greenler et al., 2024, p. 10). Beargrass, essential for fine basketry, was burned along montane ridges each fall so that, as one cultural fire practitioner describes, "that beargrass comes up just like a fine grass" — coarse and cutting before fire, workable after it (as cited in Greenler et al., 2024, p. 10). These are not incidental details. They show that the timing, location, and frequency of every burn was calibrated through intimate knowledge of specific species, their growth cycles, their cultural uses, and the seasonal movement of people through the landscape to tend them.

This web of relationships structured the landscape; the grasslands, open oak woodlands, tanoak groves, and berry patches that characterized the pre-colonial Klamath were the cumulative result of generations of burning organized around these obligations. Greenler et al. (2024) describe the resulting landscape dynamics as "ongoing ecocultural processes rather than the series of discrete disturbance and recovery events characteristic of many contemporary landscapes" (p. 14). When fire was suppressed following colonization, it was not simply a management practice that stopped. A governance system collapsed — and with it, the conditions that had sustained both the plants and the people in relationship with them. Mavis McCovey (Karuk) describes what followed: "there was a whole bunch of little Christmas trees coming up... the fir trees were just starting to grow around here because the Indians kept the villages and the sides of the hills so well burned. They were mostly just oak trees" (as cited in Greenler et al., 2024, p. 14). The hazel declined. The acorn grounds filled with insects. The beargrass coarsened. Basketweavers lost access to the materials their burning had cultivated. Karuk community members name this transformed landscape a "genocide forest" — not metaphorically, but as an accurate description of what fire suppression produced (Greenler et al., 2024, p. 4).

Fire and water in this watershed have never been separate governance concerns. Karuk Tribal Council member Troy Hockaday, speaking in the context of dam removal, held them together: "I think by bringing the fish back and bringing back fire in the lands we can show them that... it's going to bring everybody back together" (as cited in Diver et al., 2024, p. 15). Ron Reed, Karuk traditional fisherman and ceremonial leader, extended this further: "the river, the landscape and all the different attributes of the lifestyle put together makes us who we are" (as cited in Diver et al., 2024, p. 16).

Image description: Sami Jo Difuntorum sharing stories of Kikaceki, their traditional homelands which is now fenced and locked, but breathes again as the chokehold of the dam is released and the river flows through Kikaceki again. Photograph by Ayush Ag

In a visually driven profession that holds the power to influence our perception of landscapes the way cinema holds the power to influence our perception of self - it is important to remember that a material relationship devoid of cultural context can be as damaging to a place as the projections it's based upon. The visual culture which drives the profession of landscape architecture privileges ideologies that trace back to preservationists like Muir which led to a deeply disturbing removal and erasure of natives 'marring' the untouched wilderness. This idea of purity confined within the neat lines imposed upon the landscape is a fragmentation of systems which dismembers the whole. Drawn and reinforced by settlers who lacked deeper connections with the lands and waters, these lines created pristine wilderness through sustained genocidal and ecocidal acts (Gilio-Whitaker 33–34). This history of genocide and ecocide is the common thread in the formation and functioning of the nation state's land and water systems within which landscape architects operate; imposing new material relationships through formal explorations that often privilege land over water. (Mathur and da Cunha 2009, pp. 4)

Through conversations around fire, water and land with designers/architects and members of nations/tribes - the settlers disconnect from the understanding of the wholeness beyond the tangible and quantifiable ecological relationships is exposed in the acknowledgement laden landscape architecture projects that are often a production for moral positioning that 'motif-y' the practice of a culture without true grounding or a sustained relationship with the context and it's current realities.

The shift towards wholeness requires an experience of the whole, but the fragmentation has been all pervasive on American land. These lines of power have extended beyond borders drawn by the oppressor and have violated people's beyond the territorial realms, like clockwork - through lines in time, framing aesthetics that neatly move in media cycles with an agenda of distraction and distortion. The imperialist machinery attempts to fuel its self proclaimed supremacy while upholding a manufactured image that shrouds the truth wholly. That is the only wholeness the nation state seeks. The uncovering and healing of these garbed, grabbed lands through indigenous leadership is the first step towards wholeness and continuity. Restoration of relationships that the people of the watersheds developed over centuries needs to be a shared responsibility that requires institutional, federal and local support.

Academic inquiry without systems to directly support and contribute to the life ways being studied - is where the fragmentation of this system is most evident. Case draws on Tagi Qolouvaki's idea of ".....'mana-full' resistance that is 'decolonial, contagious and muscled' - to get us to not only unravel the effects of colonialism but also realize when we become complicit in those effects, presenting them in new guises. (Case 49)

As a secondary storyteller, my role is to support, not define; to listen, not lead; and to understand how landscape architecture must be accountable to the governance, priorities, and cultural protocols of the Shasta Indian Nation.

The primary storytellers are the Shasta Indian Nation—holders of place-based knowledge, cultural memory, and the responsibilities that return with the land. Any design questions or proposals are iterative conversations intended to be developed with the Nation, not imagined independent of the relationships.

Sami Jo Difuntorum is the Cultural Preservation Officer of the Shasta Indian Nation, one of between 250 and 300 enrolled members of a tribe that has been described as "the tribe the dams were built on." Based in Newport, Oregon, she has been the primary public voice for the Nation during the Klamath dam removal process — leading tours of Kikacéki for journalists, tribal leaders, and planners, and representing the Nation in meetings with Governor Newsom during the land return negotiations. Her family history is woven directly into the landscape she stewards: her great-great-grandmother Kitty Grasshopper was among the Shasta women who married white landowners in the early twentieth century as a means of maintaining proximity to ancestral lands after dispossession. Difuntorum describes the attachment her people hold to Kikacéki as something "woven into our DNA" — the land not as property but as an extension of self, submerged for over a century and now re-emerging. Her work centers the restoration of ceremony, language, and cultural continuity on the returned lands, including plans for a heritage trail, the revival of the First Salmon Ceremony, and the development of an interpretive center at the decommissioned Copco 2 powerhouse.

Notes from Kikacéki

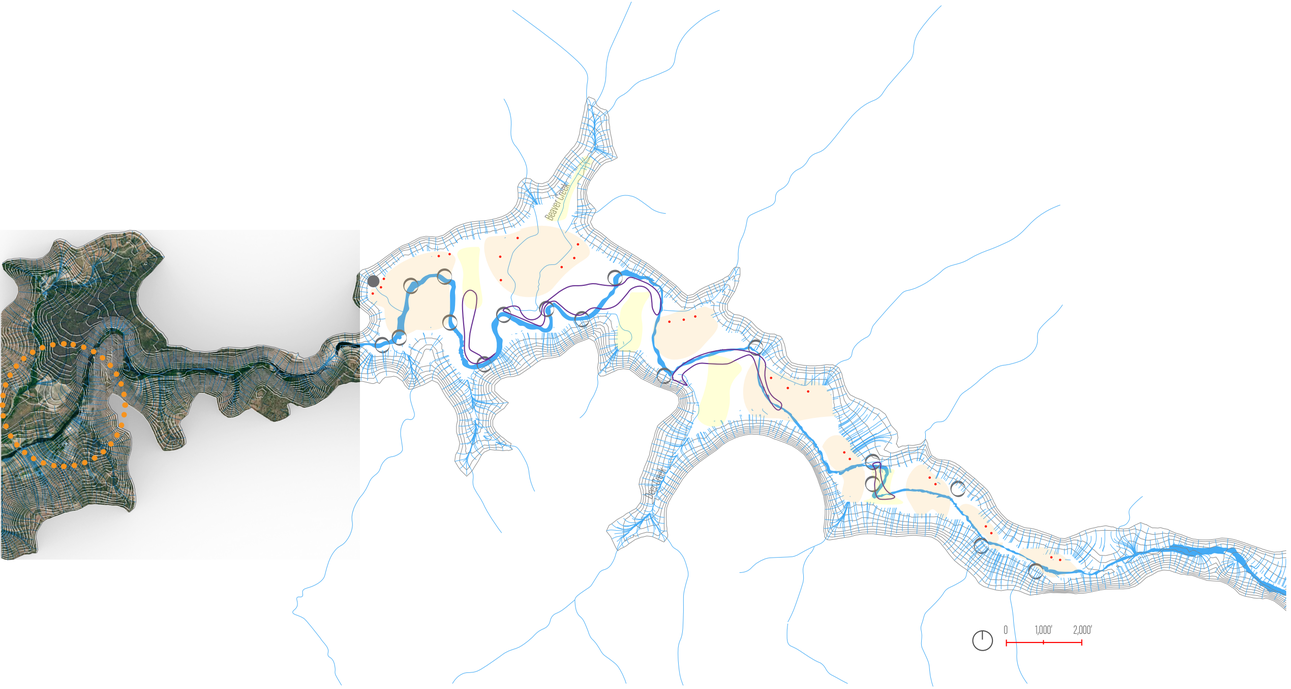
Meeting Sami at Kikacéki took months of co-ordination and came with several delays. I had first reached out at the end of 2024, when I knew very little about the Klamath watershed or the Shasta Indian Nation. Sami responded in the summer of 2025 when I was in California, and that is where the conversation began. I was unable to make the trip from the Bay due to a lack of transport options to Hornbrook, when Sami had extended an invitation to visit the site where they were planning an interpretive center with an architect from the Bay. Later in the fall, a visit had been planned but was cancelled because of a storm. I had rented a car for that trip, and my roommate Alexander had agreed to drive us, as I was not yet comfortable driving in the United States and already carried a general dislike for automobiles. Finally in November 2025, Ayush, my friend from the Brahmaputra watershed agreed to drive down from Seattle and help me reach Kikacéki for this visit, after almost a year of waiting.

I had been unusually patient through all the uncertainty, though there was a fair amount of anxiety due to the limited time I had as an arrivant - Non Resident Alien on a student visa with academic deadlines constantly looming. We finally met at a gas station in Hornbrook that had signage, ironically thanking Gavin Newsom for his heavy taxes on gas in California. It set the tone of place and politics that surrounded Kikacéki.

I introduced Sami to Ayush and his friend Udit who had agreed to take photographs during the visit. I shared my understanding of Kikacéki and the situation, along with some of my earlier design explorations on the site, which Sami appreciated. From there, we moved into listening.

The conversation started with the history of the Shasta people, the language and stories of the land, Parcel B and the role of the Governor in the process of land return, the cave, the newly built fall creek hatchery, the boats and lake houses on sale after the loss of flatwater recreation, the four heritage trails and their relationship with GreenWorks. These were shared in continuity, each part informing the other. I asked Sami how I could be useful in this process. The response was direct: to consider ways to screen the power grid that is visible from the ceremonial pit. The ceremonial pit itself is to be built by the men of the Shasta Indian Nation. The need was for ideas on how the landscape could reduce or mediate the visual presence of the power infrastructure from that space. I analyze the landscape in relation to this task and suggest ways in which the landform and vegetation could be engaged over time in relation to the imagined future of the site.

In the third section I analyze the role/work of Klamath River Renewal Corporation, Resource Environment Solutions and Greenworks at Kikaceki, through maps and publications. Possibilities are explored through iterative plans informed by conversations with Sami and other tribal members of the Klamath Watershed. The framework derived from Matunga's planning theory is applied to demonstrate how landscape architects working on indigenous lands could orient and prepare themselves for these relationships.



Listening as Method: Sami's Ask

Meeting Sami Jo Difuntorum, Cultural Preservation Officer of the Shasta Indian Nation, took nearly a year of coordination. When we finally arrived at Kikacéki in November 2025, the conversation began not with a brief or a program but with history — the land, the river, the caves, the hatcheries, the heritage trails, and the ongoing relationship between the Nation and the landscape architects already involved in site planning. The design ask that emerged was direct: to explore ways of screening the power grid visible from the ceremonial pit, which is to be constructed by members of the Shasta Indian Nation themselves.

This process of waiting, arriving, and listening is itself methodological. Kovach (2019) articulates conversation as a legitimate method within Indigenous research paradigms — not a preliminary step before work begins, but the relational ground from which knowledge is produced, positioning the researcher not as authority but as participant in an ongoing relationship. Wilson (2008) extends this further, arguing that all ideas are developed through relationships and that research is a ceremony of mutual accountability rather than extraction. To receive a specific ask — the screening of a transmission line from a ceremonial space — does not limit the scope but clarifies the role of the landscape architect.

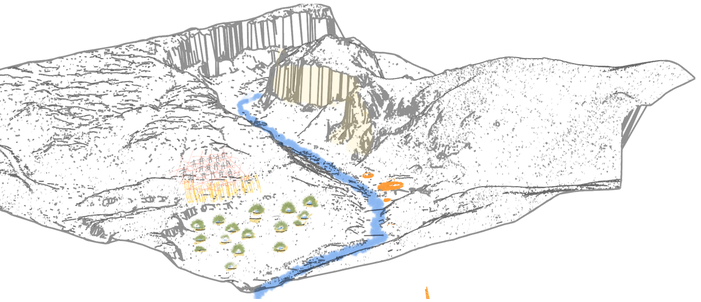
Sami's Ask

The response to Sami's ask operates at two temporal scales. The first is immediate: using cedar, sugar pine, and maple bark screening elements along the edge of the ceremonial pit. The making of skirts with tree barks is something Sami hopes to continue, and tying that craft to a functional landscape solution creates an opportunity to regenerate eco-cultural links rather than import solutions from outside the relational context. The second is long-term: establishing clusters of native, fire-resilient vegetation — black oak, white oak, manzanita, and species referenced within Shasta language documentation — to gradually build a vegetative screen over decades. Both proposals remain intentionally iterative, developed in response to guidance rather than presented as a final design proposal.

Iterative Response

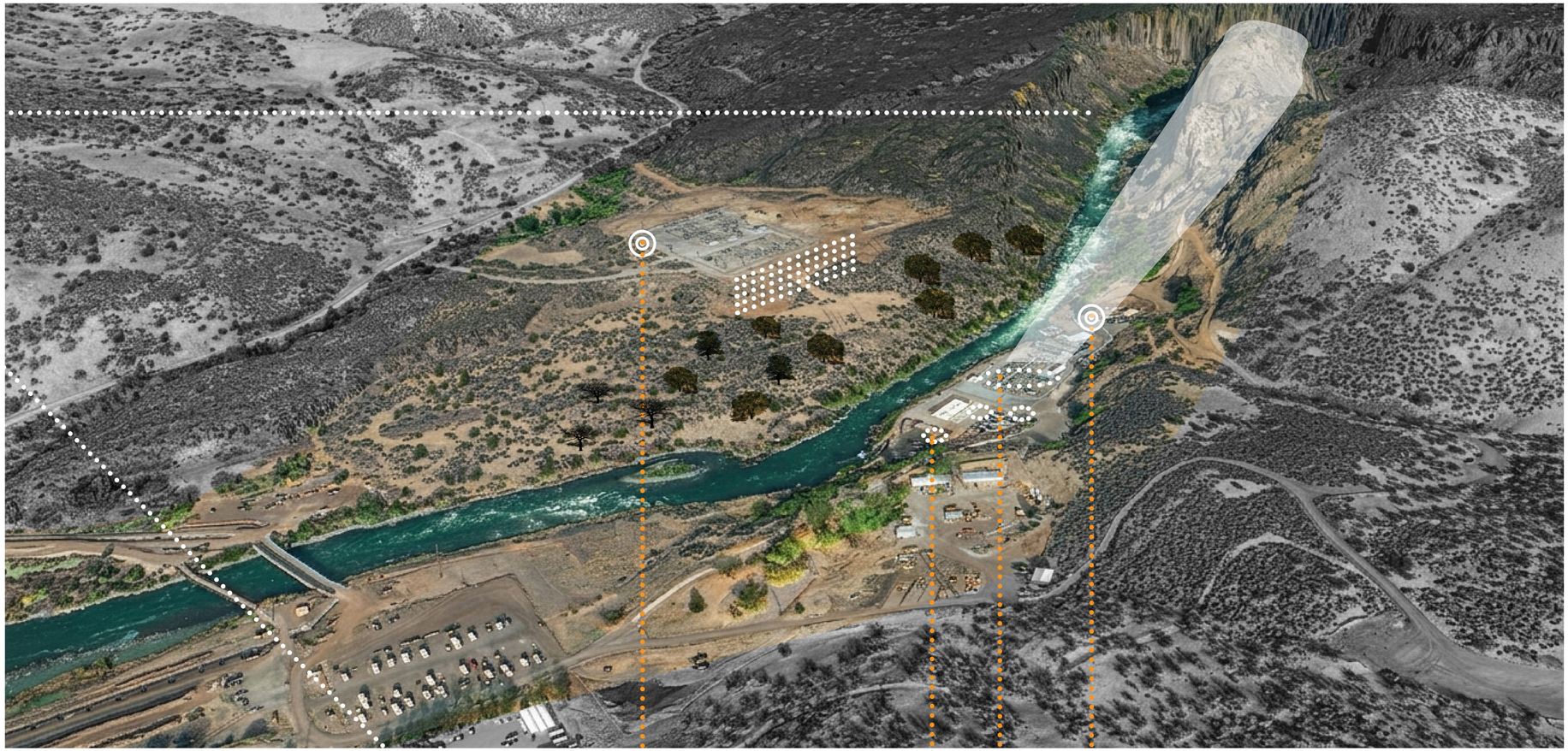
Image description: The power grid on the left and the basalt wall on the right which holds cultural and spiritual significance were both visible from the place of ceremony. The task is to screen the powergrid. The intent is to analyze the conditions and propose pathways to achieve this condition through sustained engagement with the land and water that brings cultural continuity in the lifeways and practices.

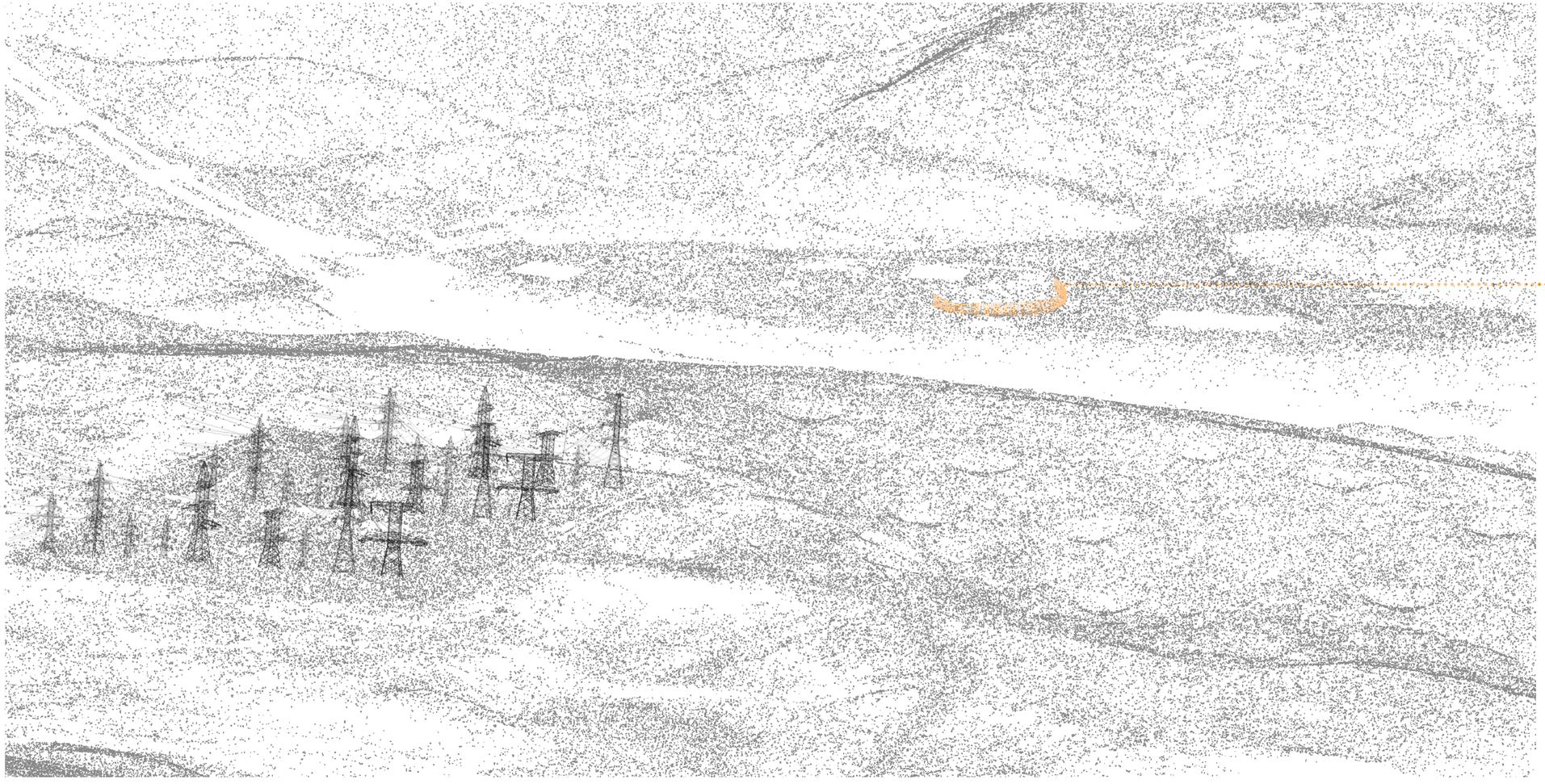
Kikaceki - Shasta Indian Nation
Hornbrook, CA



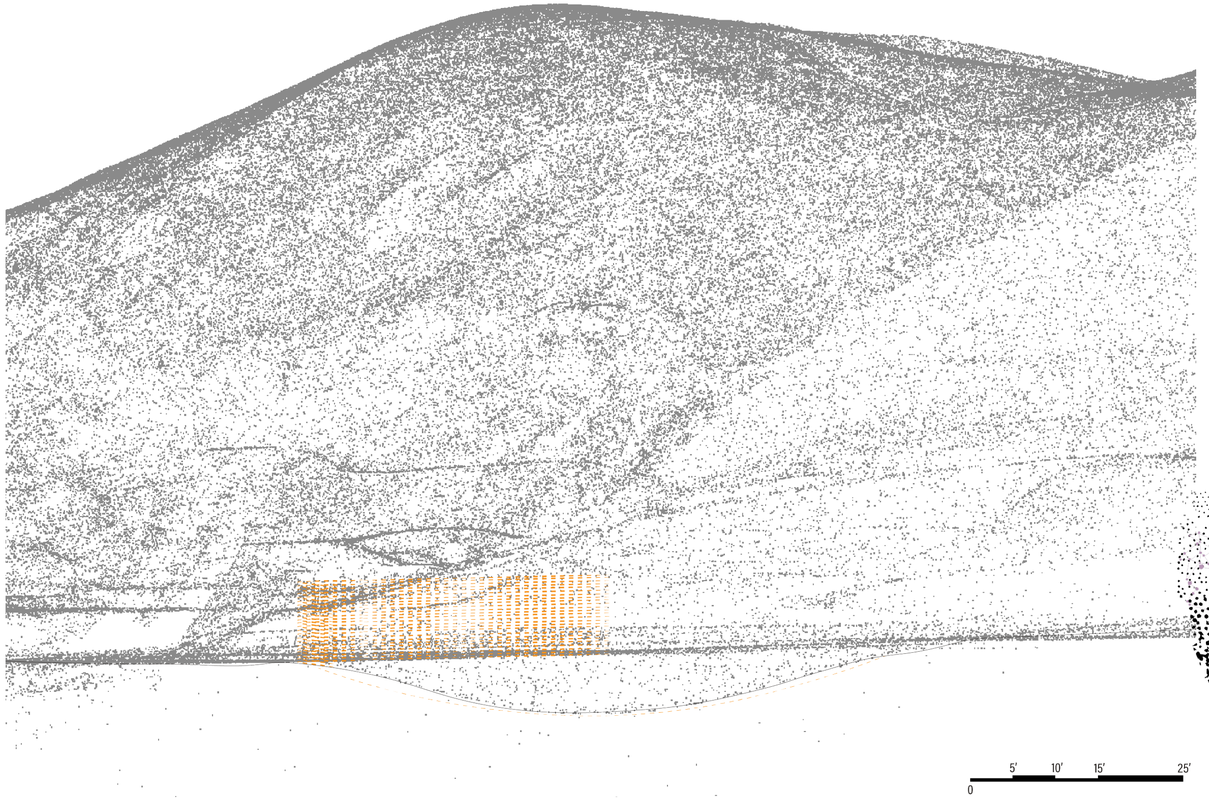
Ceremonial Pit Screening
Landscape Analysis and
Planting Strategy

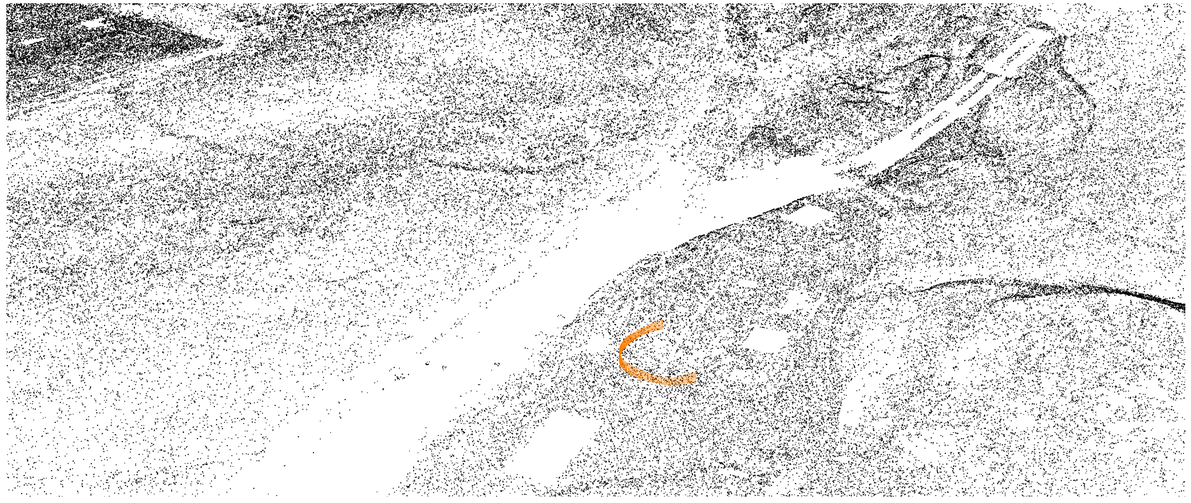
Listening as Method: **Sami's Ask**

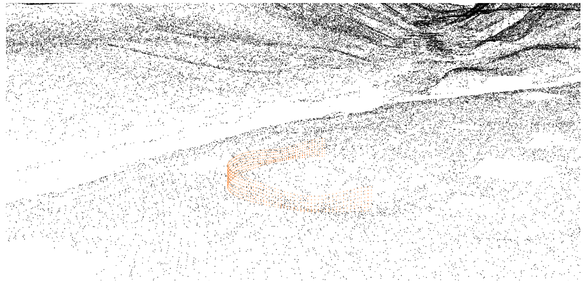


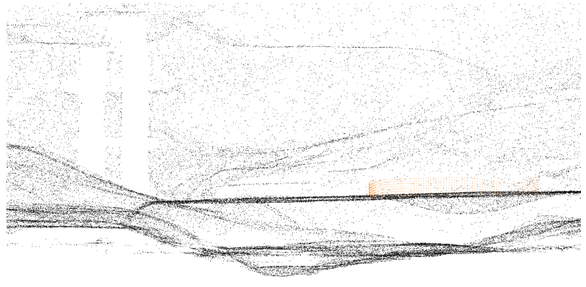

Bark Skirt Screening
Power grid

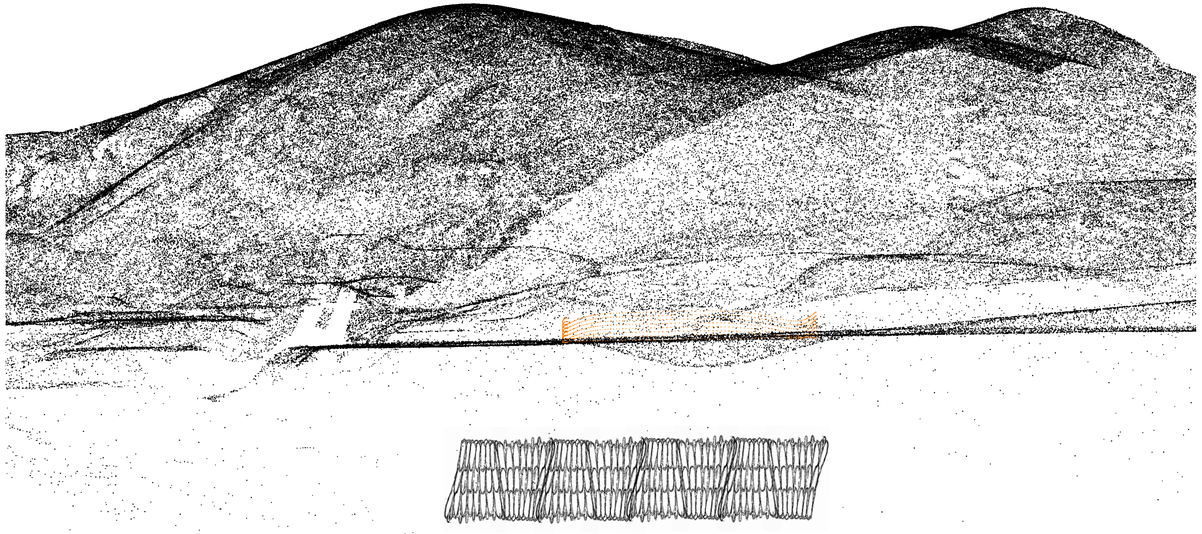
Bark skirt making is a practice that Sami hopes to restore. Tying the practice to create a solution for the ceremonial pit screening is the suggestion. The power company must fund the crafting of woven screens and bark skirts to not only mitigate the visual impact their presence has, but also to directly contribute in supporting cultural continuity through this process, which was destroyed by the hydroelectric power dams.

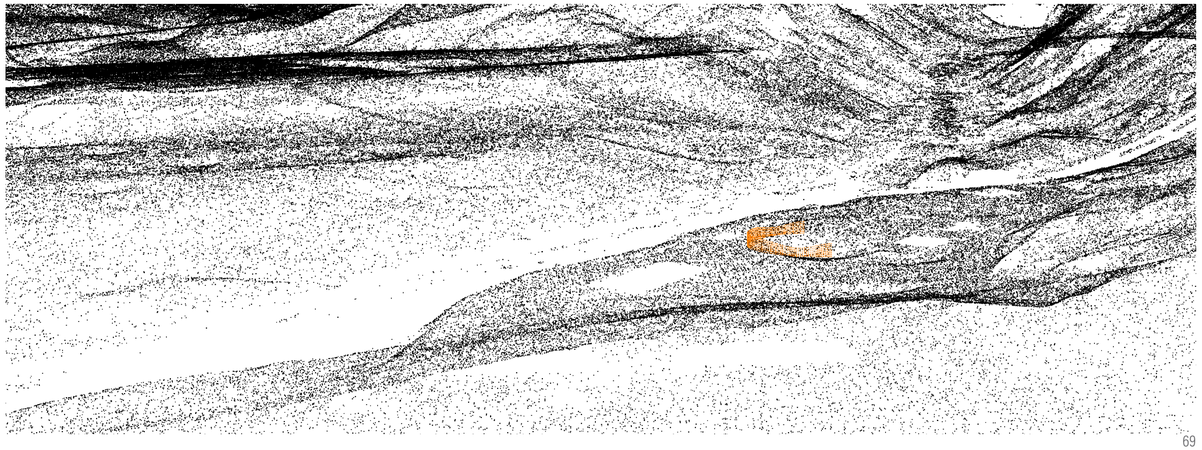












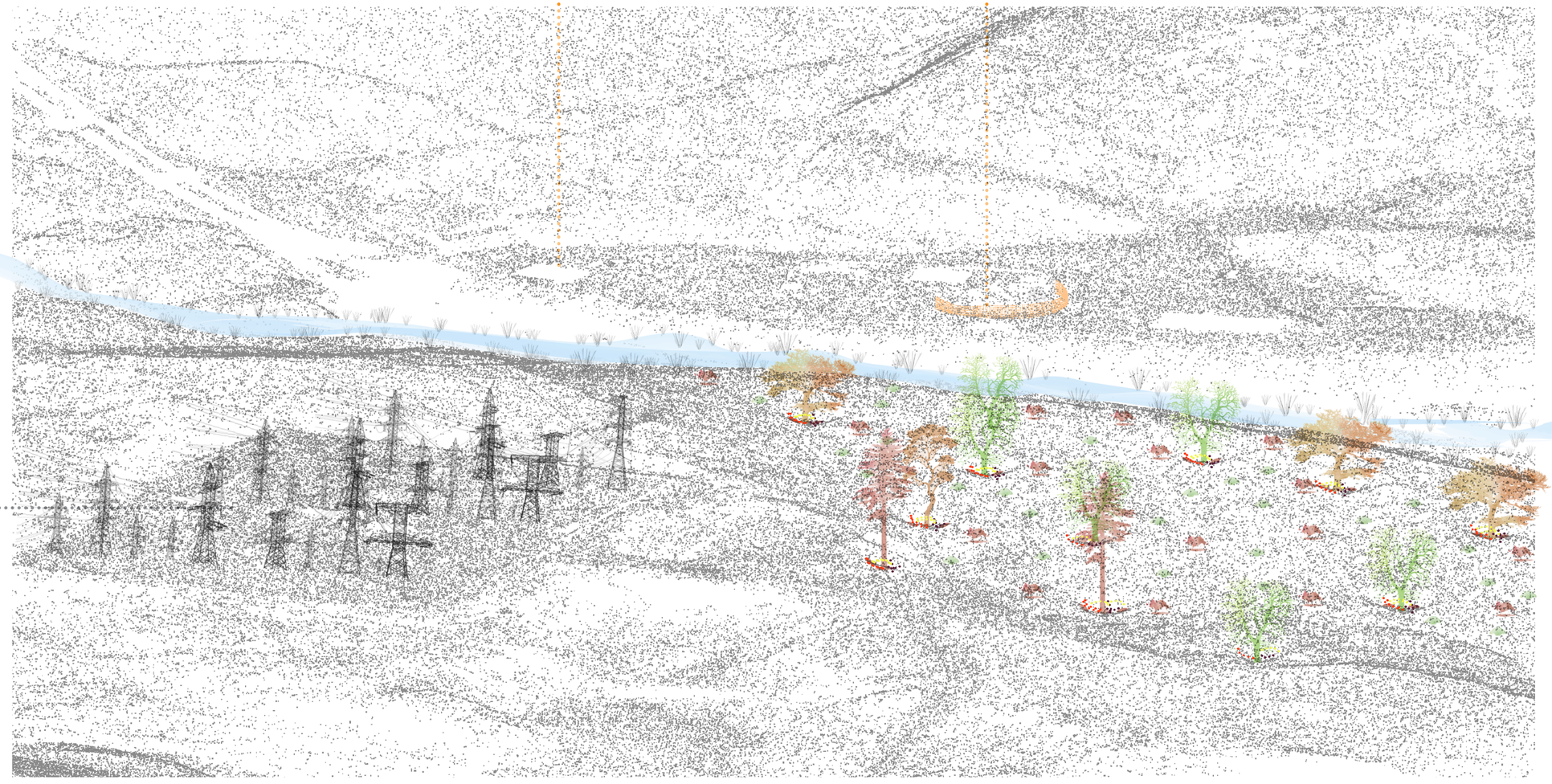
Sami's Ask

Interpretive center*

Ceremonial pit with bark skirt screen

wá·sur ʔáka·
Klamath River

Power grid



Interpretive center planned by Shasta Indian Nation within the existing power grid*

Temporal scale 2

wá·kirihi·hú?
Pacific madrone
Arubutus menziesii

ʔas·úr
Hairy manzanita
Arctostaphylos columbiana

wát·a / it·í·č'
Willow
Salix sp.

č'u·k'uru·hú?
White Oak
Quercus garryana

ʔás·u·hú?
Jeffrey Pine
Pinus jeffreyi

ʔa·xtáki·hú?
Black Oak
Quercus kellogii

ʔac·áwayhi·hú?
Sugar pine
Pinus lambertiana

ʔičumpaxi?
Grass
Idaho fescue
Festuca idahoensis
Deergrass
Muhlenbergia rigens

Mimulus cardinalis
Scarlet Monkey Flower

Lupinus albifrons
Silver Bush Lupine

Calochortus tolmei
Tolmie's Star Tulip

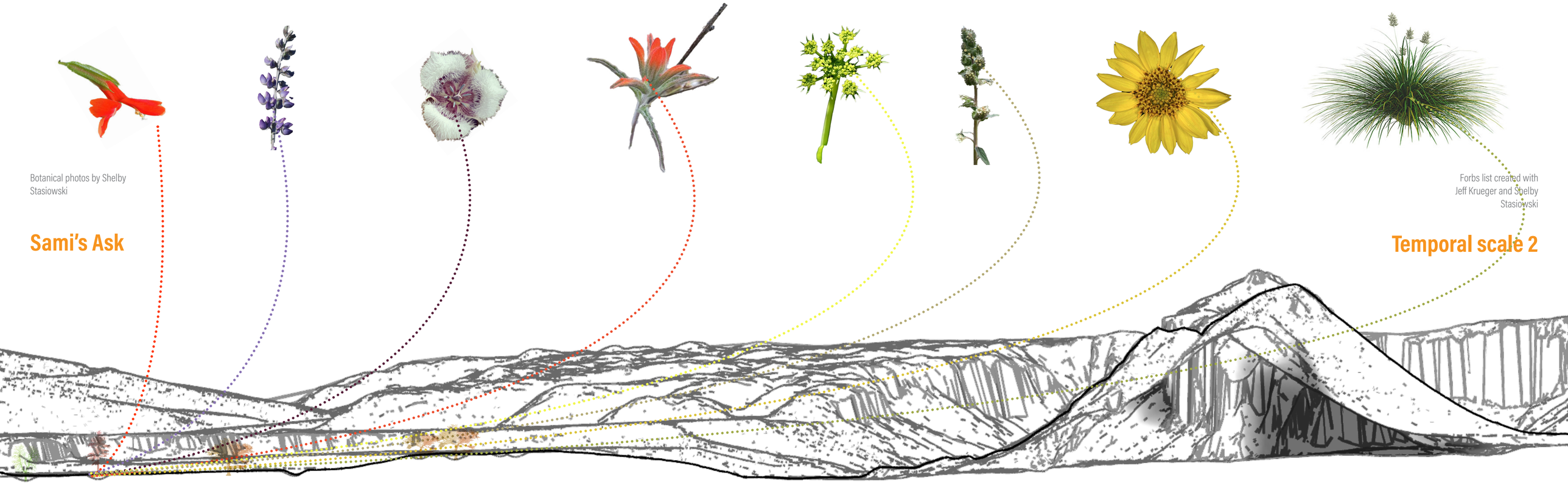
Castilleja applegatei
Wavy-Leaf Paintbrush

Lomatium californicum
California lomatium

Phacelia hastata
Silverleaf phacelia

Balsamorhiza deltoidea
Deltoid balsamroot

Festuca idahoensis
Idaho fescue

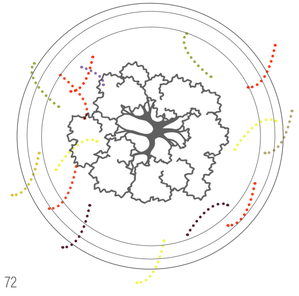


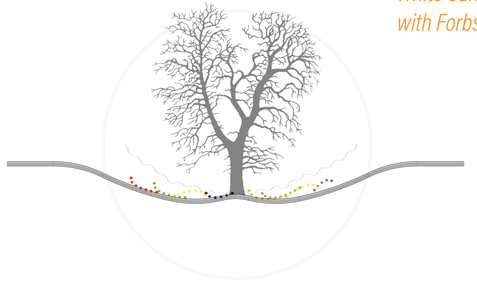
Botanical photos by Shelby Stasiowski

Forbs list created with Jeff Krueger and Shelby Stasiowski

Sami's Ask

Temporal scale 2

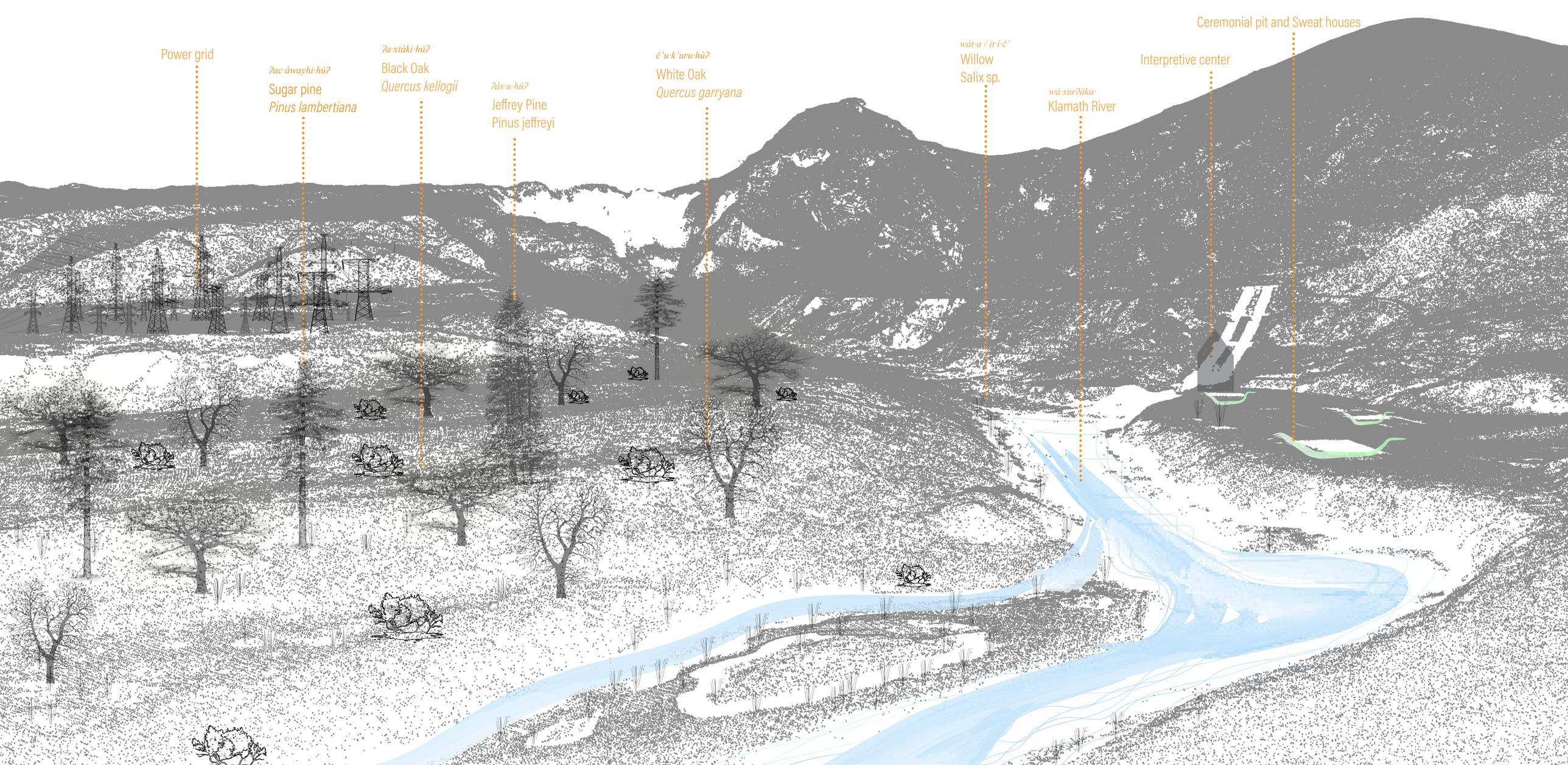




White Oak pit with Forbs

Root Stratification
Idaho fescue = fibrous upper stabilization
Lomatium = taproot mineral cycling
Balsamroot = deep anchoring drought reserve
Lupine = nitrogen fixing intermediary
Phacelia = rapid seasonal pollinator matrix

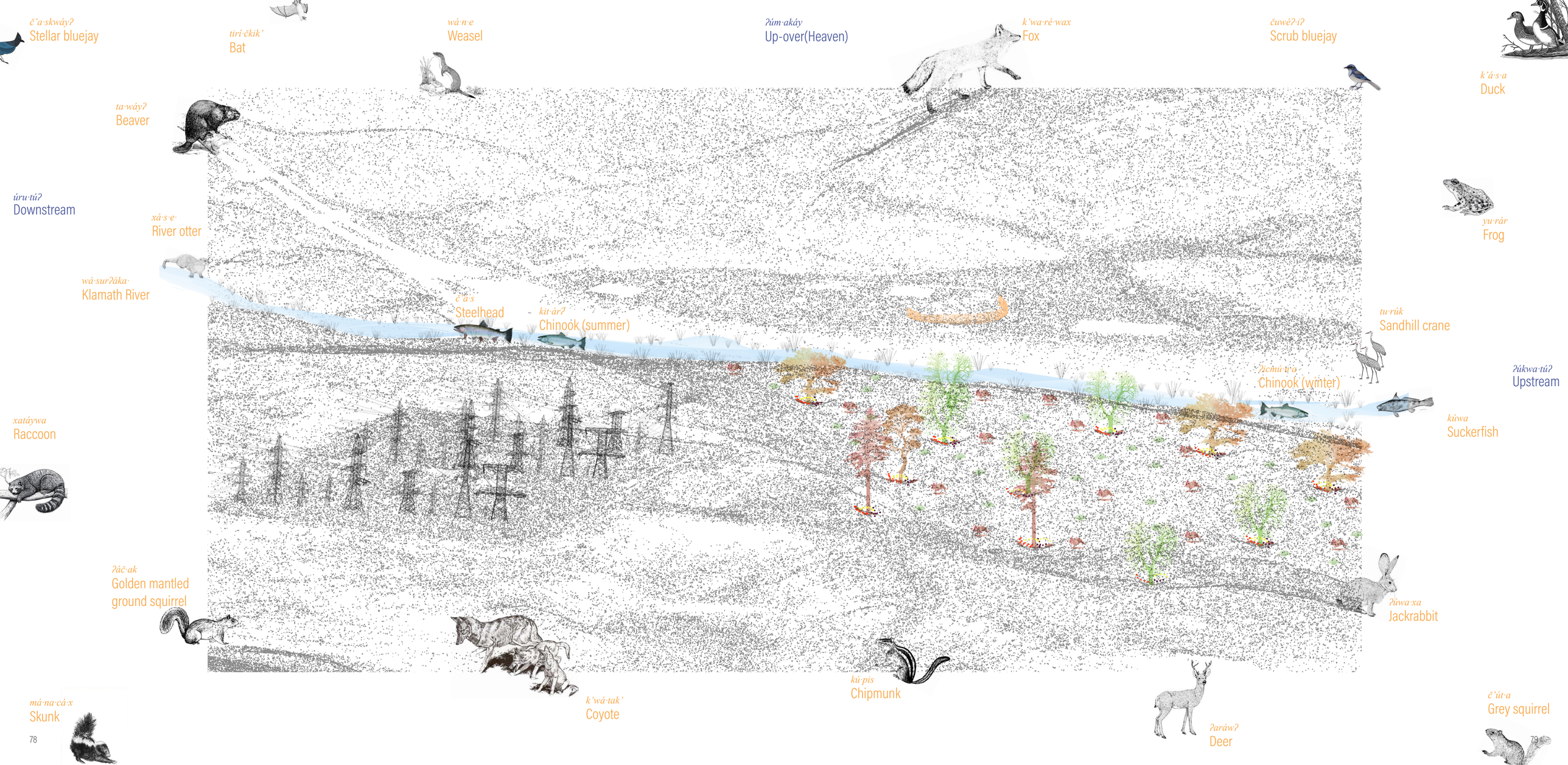
The planting proposal for the ceremonial pit screening responds to Sami's ask through a rooted system rather than a built one. The section drawing shows a stratified forb and understory composition located in isolated island pits beneath white oak, with a sparse overstory of black oak, sugar pine, Jeffrey pine, and Pacific madrone building the long-term vegetative screen. The species are selected for their ecological interdependencies as much as their visual function. Idaho fescue (Festuca idahoensis) provides fibrous upper soil stabilization; California lomatium (Lomatium californicum) cycles minerals through deep taproots; deltoid balsamroot (Balsamorhiza deltoidea) anchors drought reserves further down; silver bush lupine (Lupinus albifrons) fixes nitrogen as an intermediary layer; and silverleaf phacelia (Phacelia hastata) activates a rapid seasonal pollinator matrix. Fescue and lupine together serve as hosts for the hemiparasitic wavy-leaf paintbrush (Castilleja applegatei) — a species whose presence depends on the health of its neighbors. Tolmie's star tulip (Calochortus tolmei) and scarlet monkey flower (Mimulus cardinalis) complete the composition at the wettest and most sheltered positions. The root stratification means the system functions as a whole — each species performing a role that makes the others possible, stabilizing and enriching the soil as the overstory establishes and the screen grows over time.


Power grid
ʔac·áwayhi·huʔ
Sugar pine
Pinus lambertiana
ʔa·xtáki·huʔ
Black Oak
Quercus kellogii
ʔás·u·huʔ
Jeffrey Pine
Pinus jeffreyi
č'u·k'uru·huʔ
White Oak
Quercus garryana
wát·a / it·í·č'
Willow
Salix sp.
wá·surʔáka·
Klamath River
Interpretive center
Ceremonial pit and Sweat houses

Reciprocity: Landscape Illustration as Language Exercise

Shasta Culture Days — the annual gathering organized by the Butte Valley Indian Community — has developed a recurring structure that moves between place, history, and language. Since 2013, the event has followed a model of visiting sites of cultural and historical significance within or near Kikacéki, discussing the state of Shasta federal recognition, and incorporating a language learning component (Sarmento, 2021, p. 118). In 2013, Sarmento arrived at Copco Lake with a placename list — Shasta names for the sites the community was visiting — and found that most participants had never heard the names spoken aloud before. The experience generated an immediate desire for continued language engagement: "over the course of the three days, many expressed an interest in having a monthly language class. These conversations became the impetus for future monthly language classes" (Sarmento, 2021, p. 118). In 2014, the language lesson component extended further — after field visits to Medicine Lake and Glass Mountain, Sarmento introduced a modified game of Uno using cheat-sheets printed with Shasta numbers and colors, requiring players to name cards in Shasta as they were laid down. The game moved language from wordlist into social use — small, embodied, and tied to the pleasure of being together (Sarmento, 2021, pp. 119–120). The landscape illustration proposed here extends this model into the re-emerging landscape of Kikacéki.

Drawing on the vocabulary documented compiled by Sarmento (2021), an illustration of Kikacéki — could function as a cheat-sheet for the landscape: something to study before walking into it, and then to test against the living world. Participants at Shasta Culture Days could use the illustration to encounter Shasta names for the birds, animals, fish, and plants present at the site, then attempt to name what they encounter on the land in the Shasta language during the visit. The exercise is not a restoration plan or a design proposal. It is a gesture of accountability — directed not toward an institution but toward the living world of Kikacéki and the community for whom these names carry generational weight. Sarmento's (2021) hope in returning placenames and vocabulary to the community was to "help them make connections between their lives and the language, connections that had previously been severed" (p. 118). The Culture Days model shows that those connections are made most powerfully through being in place — walking the land, naming what is encountered, hearing the language used where it belongs.


č'a·skwáy?
Stellar bluejay
tirí·čkik'
Bat
wá·n·e
Weasel
ʔúm·akáy
Up-over(Heaven)
k'wa·ré·wax
Fox
čuwé?·i?
Scrub bluejay
k'á·s·a
Duck
ta·wáy?
Beaver
úru·tú?
Downstream
xá·s·e·
River otter
yu·rár
Frog
wá·surʔáka·
Klamath River
č'ʌ·s·
Steelhead
kit·ár?
Chinoók (summer)
tu·rúk
Sandhill crane
ʔicmú·ṯ'a·
Chinook (winter)
ʔúkwa·tú?
Upstream
xatáywa
Raccoon
káwa
Suckerfish
ʔáč·ak
Golden mantled
ground squirrel
ʔúwa·xa
Jackrabbit
kú·pis
Chipmunk
k'wá·tak'
Coyote
ʔaráw?
Deer
má·na·cá·x
Skunk
č'út·a
Grey squirrel

When Sami indicated that the Nation was entering a crucial phase within the land return process and broader engagement would need to pause; the pause became methodological direction. Rather than expanding the project independently without guidance, the work shifted — continuing to listen, through other relational conversations already shaping the conditions at Kikacéki.

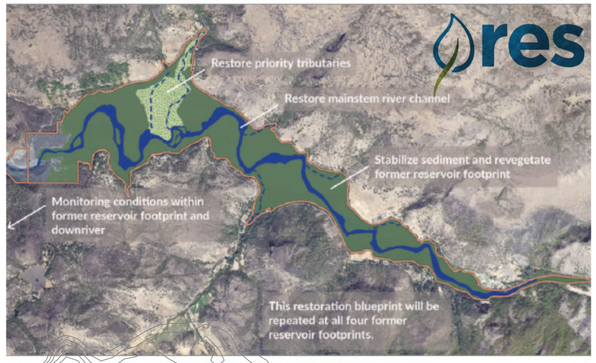
Listening as Method: **Fluid Occupancies**

Following a conversation with Ron Reed — Karuk Tribe member, traditional dipnet fisherman, ceremonial leader, and co-founder of the Karuk Tribe–UC Berkeley Collaborative — after his talk at the longhouse on Kalapuya Ilihi, a different planning logic for Kikacéki began to take shape. Reed described how seasonal settlements along the river, organized around the collection of basketry and weaving materials, would enable zoned management of fire — reducing dependency on helicopter operations and high-emissions fire management while allowing relational eco-cultural revitalization to unfold through sustained presence on the land (Diver et al., 2024, p. 16). Greenler et al. (2024) document precisely this connection in the neighboring Karuk context: cultural burning was organized around seasonal movement through the landscape, with ignitions tied to resource gathering, trail maintenance, and the phenological cycles of key cultural use species (p. 11). The seasonal village cluster is not a nostalgic proposition. It is a planning system in which the people who tend the land are present enough to tend it well.

The aerial river access points established by KRRC/RES create a landscape condition in which vegetation at river edges cannot exceed eighteen inches. The interpretive plan locates seasonal village clusters at bends in the river, where floodplain wetlands and off-channel habitats re-emerging after dam removal create the conditions for basketry plant cultivation and low-intensity burning. Wetland edges here are not ecological buffers. They are productive landscapes where willow, sedge, and weaving materials grow in direct relationship with the people who tend and harvest them. Mathur and da Cunha (2009) describe this kind of planning as organizing around fluid occupancies rather than fixed land uses — a system that changes seasonally, based on relationships, resisting the imposition of defined edges and static programs (p. 4). At Kikacéki, fluid occupancy means the land plan is not a diagram to be implemented but a conversation to be continued: wetland conditions inform when and where low-intensity burns occur; burning informs which plants establish; plant establishment informs where seasonal camps are sited; and camp siting informs future decisions about access, trails, and the gradual return of craft practices to the landscape.

This decentralized approach could, as Reed suggests, accommodate uncertainty through resilience rather than overcome it through prediction — reducing the dependency on top-down fire management that currently erodes the practical sovereignty of the Shasta Indian Nation over their own returned land. The plan does not prescribe what the Nation should build. It attempts to plan a landscape system capable of sustaining whatever the Nation identifies as central to its future.

This raises the central question this project has been building toward: how must landscape architectural design operate when Indigenous leadership, governance, and relationship restoration — rather than public access, sensorial experience, or amenity production — define both the purpose and the limits of design?



Blueprint for restoring each of the reservoir footprints.

Sami explained that Wild Iris indicate burials as it was part of the Shasta customs to plant them on grave sites

Ground disturbing work going on around Beaver Creek was not appreciated by the Shasta Cultural Monitors. Sami had to explain to RES how emotional this process was to the people. Some RES workers were receptive, some carried out the work like it was their rightful duty and it had to done the way science dictates chasing the metrics they need to meet, causing significant tension. But RES had generally maintained the relationship well.

RES/KRRC under Shasta cultural monitoring

- Aerial river access point
- Dry Hydrant
- Wetlands, Floodplain, Off-channel habitat
- Proposed recreation area/Boat Launch

Beaver Creek

Deer Creek

Dam removal eliminated three reservoirs used for firefighting, leading to vegetation regrowth. To mitigate wildfire risk, KRRC installed fire detection cameras, built fire truck access ramps, added dry hydrants, provided dip tanks for helicopters, and supports local fire prevention efforts. The recreation/boat launch site was proposed after consultation with the Shasta Indian nation. Four heritage trails and the recreation sites in the Lower Klamath were planned and designed by **GreenWorks** - are currently under development.

Fire Management, Restoration and Recreation plan

0 1,000' 2,000'

"The Tribe urges the State Water Board to reconsider its finding that the restoration of the free-flowing Klamath River will permanently decrease response ability for catastrophic fire. Although reservoirs provide more options for emergency aerial water tanker response, this is a very small portion of the overall response to fire danger. Safe evacuation routes (which will be left in an improved state due to necessary upgrades for demolition activities), fuels management, and a host of other factors go into this determination. We believe that other activities (a renewed focus on fuels management, for example) can offset the loss of flatwater areas for refilling aerial tankers. It is also possible for restoration projects to deliberately include off-channel areas suitable for filling water buckets via helicopter."

Yurok Tribe's Comments on the Lower Klamath Project License Surrender DEIR

In a conversation about cultural fire, and seasonal settlements with Ron Reed (Karuk Tribe member, traditional dipnet fisherman, ceremonial leader and co-founder of the Karuk Tribe–UC Berkeley Collaborative) after his talk at the long house situated in Kalapuya Ilihi - he shared how seasonal settlements along the river to collect basketry/weaving material would allow for zoned management of fires - reducing the dependency on helicopters and high energy(GHG) fire management practices and allow relational eco-cultural revitalization.

('Etuaptmumk' - Two-eyed seeing)

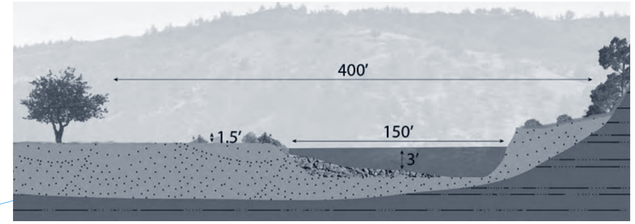
Seasonal village clusters

The restoration plan along with aerial river access points proposed by RES becomes the defined land use base upon which the iterative planning for the fluid occupancy of seasonal village clusters is imagined. The seasonal clusters along the bends of the river are situated on the northern end in this iteration - however this is merely a suggestion to initiate a conversation and continue working towards a adaptive future directed by the Shasta Indian Nation.

Listening as Method: **Fluid Occupancies**

RES/KRRC under Shasta cultural monitoring

- Wetlands, Floodplain, Off-channel habitat
- Proposed recreation area
- Aerial river access point
- Dry Hydrant



The helicopter access points marked by KRRC/RES create a landscape condition where the edges of the river cannot be planted with vegetation taller than 18". The fire management would be decentralized by closer tending with the seasonal villages that manage the wetlands for basketry weaving and carry out low intensity burns when necessary as suggested by Ron Reed. This could be a way to "...accommodate uncertainty through resilience, not overcome it with prediction", eliminating the need for top down management and diluting the sovereignty of the Shasta Indian Nation on the grounds of fire management.

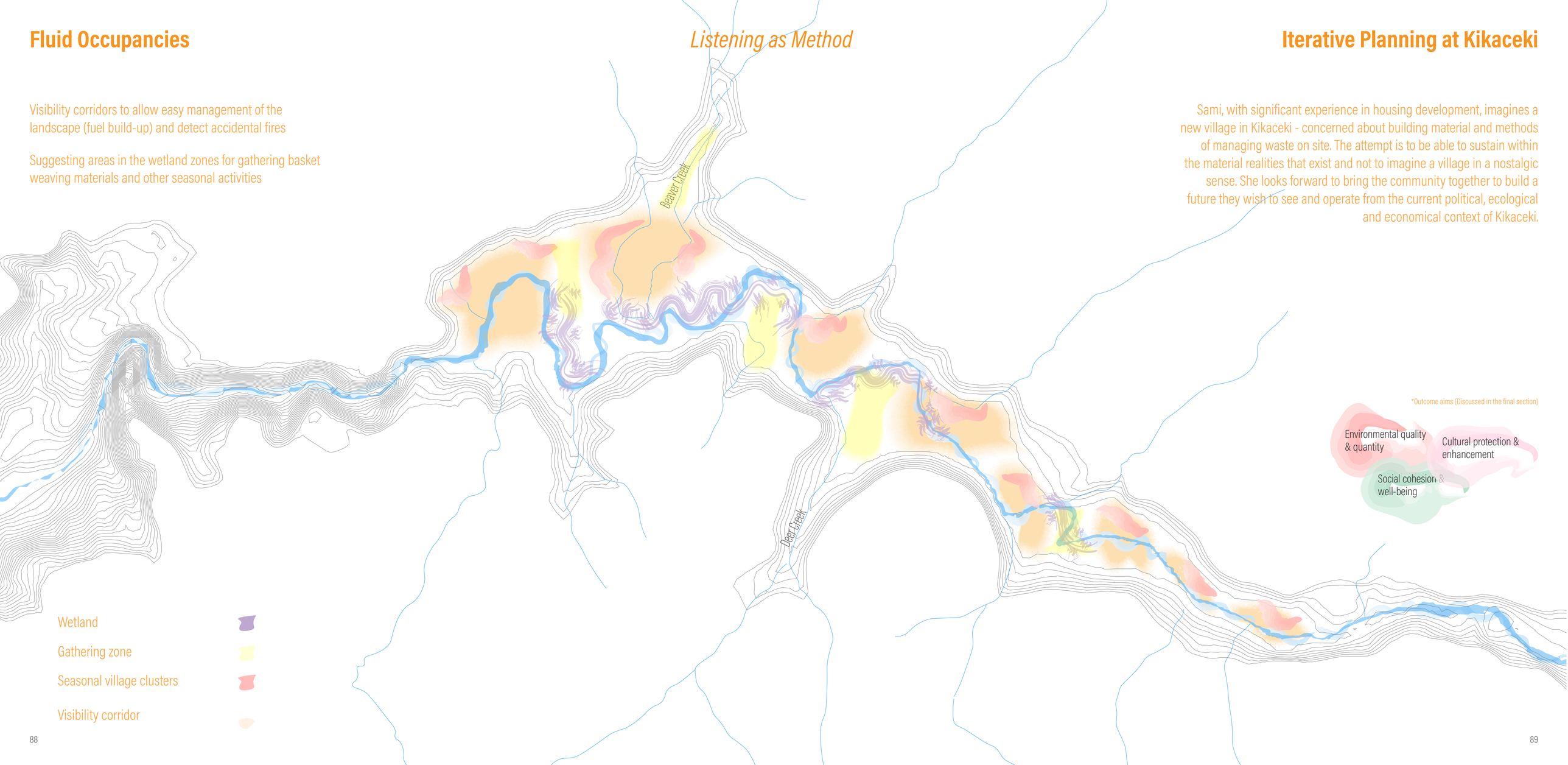
Mathur, Anuradha and Dilipa da Cunha. SOAK: Mumbai in an Estuary. New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2009

0 1,000' 2,000'

Fluid Occupancies

Visibility corridors to allow easy management of the landscape (fuel build-up) and detect accidental fires

Suggesting areas in the wetland zones for gathering basket weaving materials and other seasonal activities



Iterative Planning at Kikaceki

Sami, with significant experience in housing development, imagines a new village in Kikaceki - concerned about building material and methods of managing waste on site. The attempt is to be able to sustain within the material realities that exist and not to imagine a village in a nostalgic sense. She looks forward to bring the community together to build a future they wish to see and operate from the current political, ecological and economical context of Kikaceki.

*Outcome aims (Discussed in the final section)

xácki ~ xáčki

3.0
Grounding/Watering/Tending

Grounding the role of landscape architects at Kikaceki

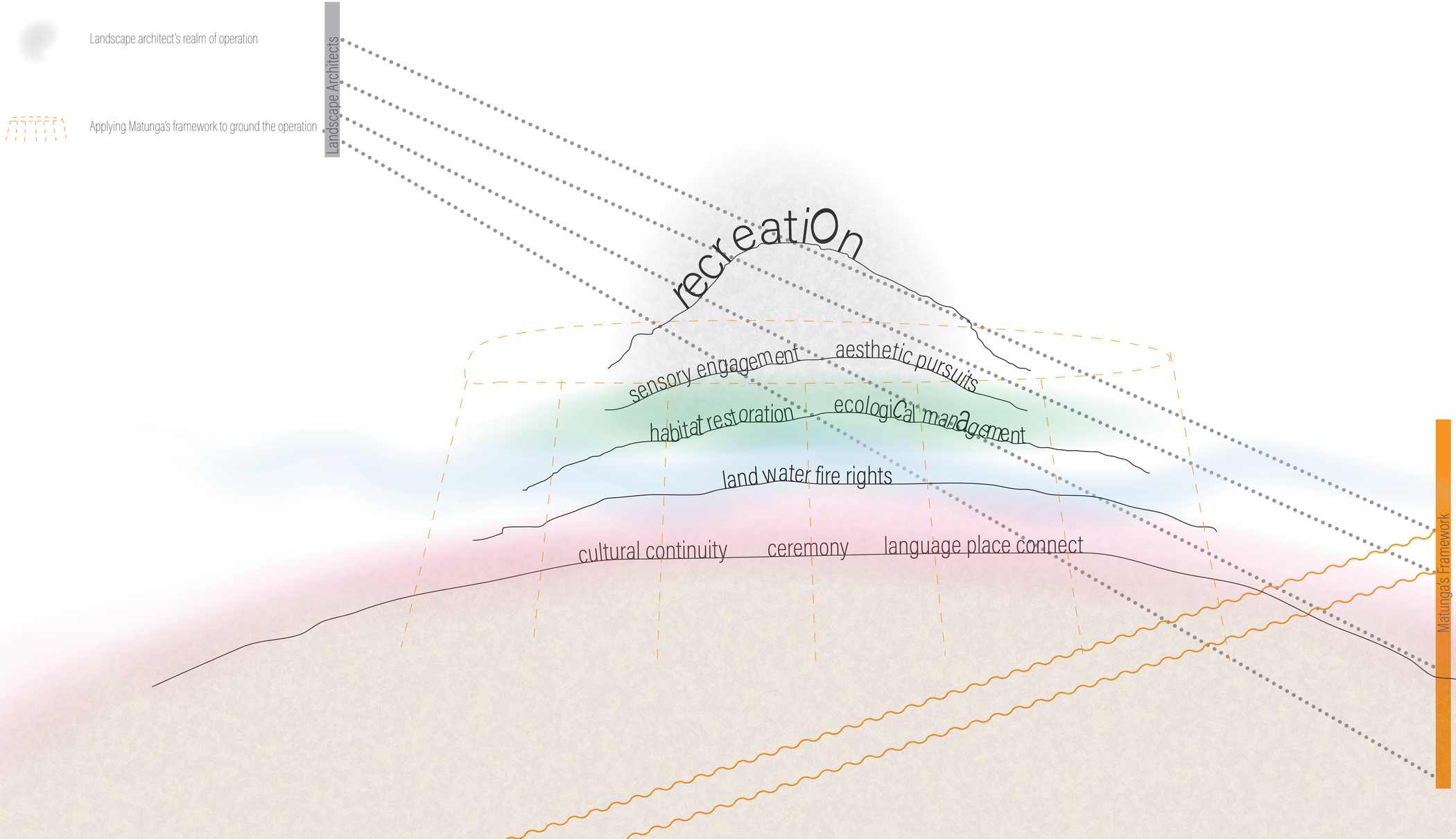
How can landscape architectural design operate when Indigenous leadership, governance, and relationship restoration—rather than public access, sensorial experience, recreation or amenity production—define the purpose and limits of design?

This question centers the transformation of design practice, asking how designers must reorient their role when Indigenous authority determines not only outcomes but also processes, timing, and protocols. The question deliberately resists framing design as a problem-solving mechanism and instead positions it as a **practice accountable to Indigenous governance** by using **Matunga's planning method to orient the designer.** The designer does not operate from a position of a leading expert but is accountable to indigenous leadership and shares responsibility over the outcome which is imagined through a sustained relationship.

Matunga, H. (2013). Theorizing Indigenous planning. In R. Walker, T. Jojola, & D. Natcher (Eds.), Reclaiming Indigenous planning (pp. 26-48). McGill-Queen's University Press.

3.1
Grounding the role of landscape architects

Within the context of publicly funded and agency-led post-dam projects, landscape architecture is often positioned as a deliverer of public amenity — access, recreation, and interpretive experience of restored ecologies. Within the Pacific Northwest, on the Elwha River, where two dams were removed between 2011 and 2014 on the ancestral territory of the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, post-removal design centered on visitor overlooks, interpretive exhibits, accessible viewpoints, and hiking trail infrastructure (National Park Service, 2014). The Lower Klamath Recreation Sites project follows a similar logic — framed around boat ramps, trails, picnic facilities, and interpretive exhibits, with tribal nations listed alongside recreational interest groups as seemingly equivalent stakeholders (GreenWorks). In both cases, the design scope is organized around public access and recreational mitigation rather than around the governance priorities or relational restoration needs of the tribes whose territories these landscapes occupy. This does not describe all landscape architecture practice. But within the specific institutional context of federally funded post-dam infrastructure, the recreational and visual framing is evident in the two large projects in the region — and it is that framing this project attempts to reorient through Matunga's framework.



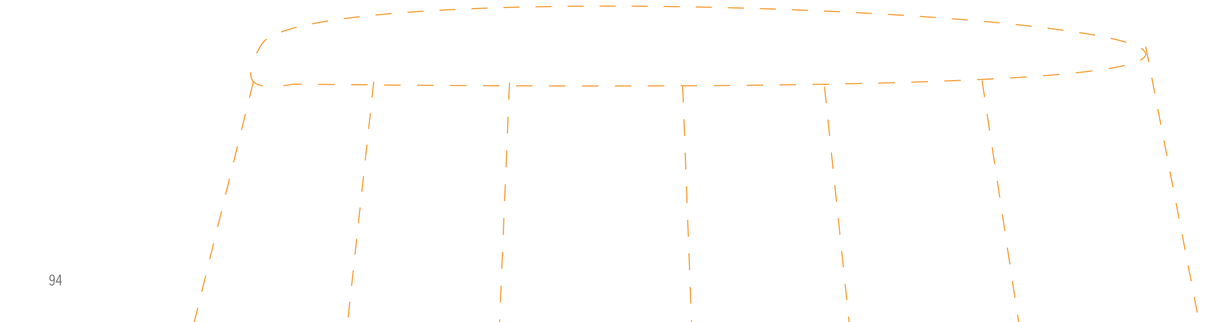
3.2 Framing Kikacéki through Indigenous Planning

(after Hirini Matunga)

Hirini Matunga, Director of the Centre for Maori and Indigenous Planning and Development at Lincoln University, argues that **Indigenous planning is not a derivative or corrective form of Western planning**, but a distinct practice that has always existed and continues to evolve in response to colonial violence, dispossession, and contemporary resurgence. **Planning, in this framing is a political, ethical, and relational process grounded in people, place, knowledge, values, and decision-making authority (Matunga 2013 pp. 26-48).**

Applying this framework to Kikacéki requires **decentering recreation-led, mitigation-oriented, or post-project planning logics** and instead situating design within Indigenous authority, ceremony, and long-term stewardship. Kikacéki is not an opportunity site created by dam removal; it is a continuing cultural landscape whose planning must be led by Shasta governance, knowledge systems, and futures.

Matunga, H. (2013). Theorizing Indigenous planning. In R. Walker, T. Jojola, & D. Natcher (Eds.), Reclaiming Indigenous planning (pp. 26-48). McGill-Queen's University Press.



Asking Critical Questions

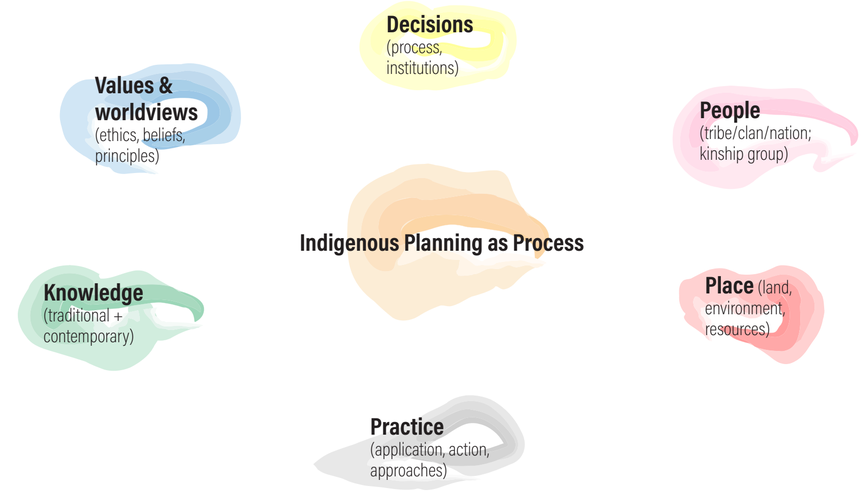
Whose future?

Where are Indigenous people positioned?

Whose knowledge counts?

Whose methods?

Who decides?



Indigenous Planning as Outcome

Cultural protection & enhancement

Environmental quality & quantity

Social cohesion & well-being

Economic growth & distribution

Political autonomy & advocacy

3.3 Situating the Process at Kikacéki

Most planning processes begin with a site and work outward — establishing goals, mapping conditions, proposing interventions, and presenting outcomes. The process at Kikacéki works differently. It begins with relationship and works inward toward design only as far as relationship permits.

Situating the process means that every methodological and design decision is anchored to the specific conditions of this place, this community, and this moment — the Shasta Indian Nation receiving land that was taken, a watershed mid-restoration, a language being reclaimed, a ceremonial life being rebuilt. There is no transferable template. The process cannot be lifted from Kikacéki and applied elsewhere because it is not a method in that sense. It is a response to a set of relationships that exist only here.

This distinguishes it from conventional planning in a structural way. Traditional planning frameworks — even participatory or community-engaged ones — tend to position the planner as the professional who holds the process: setting timelines, defining deliverables, facilitating input, and synthesizing outcomes into a plan. Community members are consulted within a structure that the planner controls. At Kikacéki, that structure is inverted. The Shasta Indian Nation holds the process. The designer's role is to be useful within it — responding to specific asks, pausing when asked to pause, listening when there is nothing yet to respond to.

Situating the process also means accepting that incompleteness is not a failure of the project. A year of coordination before a single site visit, a pause mid-engagement, proposals that remain deliberately open — these are not gaps in the methodology. They are the methodology. The process moves at the speed of the relationships that make it legitimate.

Process element	What it means at Kikaceki	How it affects design process	Design-research outputs
People (tribe/clan/ nation; kinship group)	Governance and community responsibility held by the Shasta Nation; authority is not "stakeholder input" but decision-making right.	Shifts "participation" to Indigenous authority; the designer is not the agenda-setter.	Relationship map of decision roles (who decides what, when, how); protocol + boundary notes (what is not to be designed/represented).
Place (land, environment, resources)	A returning cultural landscape—river terraces, ceremonial areas, re-emerging wetlands/sediment—within a wider Klamath cultural riverscape.	"Site" is a place with obligations; design begins with what the land is becoming, and how the nation sees its future	Transition atlas (seasonal water/sediment shifts, seasonal settlement safe zones; "return conditions"
Knowledge (traditional + contemporary)	Shasta language/place-relations, ceremony protocols, river memory, hydrology, sediment dynamics, revegetation practices—held/ validated by the community.	Shasta nation determines relevance and what must remain public/non-public	Knowledge ledger : dual-knowledge overlays that show where Western metrics fail to read relational meaning.
Values & worldviews (ethics, beliefs, principles)	Land/water as relation; ceremony safety; intergenerational continuity; refusal of recreation-first programming.	Relationality/responsibility metrics over amenity metrics	Values-to-criteria matrix (how a value becomes a spatial criterion like privacy, access timing, visibility limits).
Decisions (process, institutions)	Decision legitimacy sits with Shasta governance; design must align with the cadence of land return and cultural time, not project deadlines.	Shift from deliverables and linear progress to allow time for iterative design with pauses	Decision timeline diagram (when design input is appropriate, when it is not);
Practice (application, action, approaches)	Practices that operationalize values: ceremonial sequences, burn/maintenance rhythms, youth learning routes, stewardship zones	Focus on how decisions live in land forms over time	Interpretations and iteration

3.4

Asking the core questions

Before applying Matunga's framework to reimagine how the boat launch and recreation site at Kikacéki could be brought into greater alignment with the Shasta Indian Nation's priorities, the project language published on Greenworks' website is worth examining. The published material is brief — a project blurb accompanied by images and maps. This is not unusual; landscape architecture studio websites routinely rely on drawings, visuals, and photography rather than extended written description to communicate their work. That convention is not itself the problem. The problem is the absence of critical reflection around what it means to work on Indigenous lands — a gap that this kind of publication format tends to reinforce rather than challenge, regardless of intent.

What the Greenworks project description does offer is a positionality — a set of framing choices about what the project is for, who it serves, and how success is defined. Reading that framing through Matunga's core planning questions makes the recreational orientation of the language visible, and opens space to ask what different questions might produce. The recreation-centric framing does not necessarily mean that cultural considerations were absent from Greenworks' design process. In conversation with Sami Jo Difuntorum, Cultural Preservation Officer of the Shasta Indian Nation, the friction in the relationship with Greenworks was raised — not as a condemnation but as an honest account of the difficulty any practice faces when moving outside its established methods and into an Indigenous-led project. That friction is worth sitting with rather than smoothing over. It reflects a genuine challenge: breaking from routine process is difficult, and the professional conventions of landscape architecture — how projects are scoped, how outcomes are defined, how community engagement is structured — were not built for this context.

Matunga's framework is applied here not to critique Greenworks specifically but to offer any practice working on Indigenous lands a set of orienting questions that can shift the terms of engagement before design begins.

"...the trick for Indigenous planning is to frame itself against the backdrop of a still virulent racist discourse but not get consumed by it. To do this requires a high degree of creativity, innovation and reflexivity." (Matunga 2013, pp. 26)

"The critical questions for Indigenous peoples have always been: Whose future? Who decides what this future should or could look like? Who is doing the analysis and making the decisions? Who has the authority, the control, the final decision-making power? Whose values, ethics, concepts, and knowledge? Whose methods and approaches? What frameworks, institutions, and organizations are being used to guide the planning processes that most affect Indigenous peoples? Where are Indigenous peoples positioned in the construction of that future?"

(Matunga 2013 pp. 26-48)

Boat Launch Site - Visuals by Greenworks

Lower Klamath River Recreation Sites by Greenworks

GreenWorks is a Portland-based landscape architecture firm "dedicated to creating vibrant connections between people and the natural world," whose work "blends ecological science, cultural context, and community vision to shape resilient parks, streetscapes, waterfronts, and natural systems" (GreenWorks Website). This framing positions landscape as infrastructure — linking ecological performance, public health, and daily experience into what the practice describes as "enduring places that serve communities and the environment alike" (GreenWorks Website). The language aligns with contemporary ecological design discourse, yet also reproduces a familiar abstraction: complex, lived landscapes are translated/transmuted into systems that can be planned, managed, and recreated upon. The emphasis on public access and community amenity situates their work within the established framing that prioritizes access and recreational use, often without engaging the histories of land transformation and displacement that make such access possible.

The Lower Klamath River Recreation Sites project description reflects this orientation with GreenWorks leading design for four recreation sites "freed from inundation" following dam removal, advancing construction documents for amenities including "picnic and restroom facilities, boat ramps, trails, parking, and interpretive exhibits" (GreenWorks, n.d.-b). The Shasta Indian Nation and the Klamath tribe are listed among the tribes, and other stakeholders consulted alongside federal and state agencies and recreational interest groups — a framing in which tribal nations and recreational users, seemingly occupy equivalent positions within a public access oriented planning process (GreenWorks). The cultural and political significance of the land return is not present in the project description. This is not necessarily a failure of the design process itself — the published blurb reflects the conventions of professional portfolio communication rather than a full account of practice. But those conventions are not neutral. What a practice chooses to foreground in its public-facing language shapes how the work is understood, replicated, and evaluated by others in the field.

3.4

Asking the core questions

Lower Klamath River Recreation Sites

GreenWorks is leading the design for four recreation sites in conjunction with the removal of four hydroelectric dams on the Lower Klamath River, formerly operated by PacifiCorp. GreenWorks led on-site meetings for a large group of Tribes and other stakeholders, including the Shasta Indian Nation, the Klamath Tribe, federal and state agencies, and recreational interest groups, to review plans for providing recreational access to the river. The GreenWorks team has advanced design to 100% construction documents for the four recreation sites now freed from inundation. The sites feature several amenities, including picnic and restroom facilities, boat ramps, trails, parking, and interpretive exhibits. Construction began in 2024.

Designer position before the questions

Core question	Situating the question in Kikacéki	Misaligned design approach/stance	Aligned design approach/stance
Whose future?	Whose future does post-dam restoration optimize—public recreation, agencies, or Shasta continuity?	"Public access" treated as default good.	Shasta continuity is primary; public access is conditional and may be refused.
Where are Indigenous people positioned?	Are Shasta people framed as stakeholders or as governing authority?	"Community engagement" language that preserves consultant control.	Governance-first framing; design follows Indigenous protocols and timing.
Whose knowledge counts?	Which knowledge system sets meaning—metrics or place-relations?	Hydrology/ecological analysis used as primary truth; culture/language/ceremony as add-on.	Shasta place-relations orient meaning; technical tools serve selectively
Whose methods?	Are methods extractive or relational?	Data driven planning and mapping without cultural orientation	Consent, refusal, non-disclosure are design constraints
Who decides?	Who has final decision power over ceremonial areas, thresholds, routes, and interpretation?	Design team curates options; tribe "chooses" from a menu.	Shasta governance sets agenda, boundaries, and may decline design altogether.

GreenWorks is assisting the tribes/nations in the design process to make way for recreation on the Lower Klamath River.

GreenWorks supported on-site meetings led by respective Tribes for each site and other stakeholders, including the Shasta Indian Nation, the Klamath Tribe, federal and state agencies, and recreational interest groups, to review plans that would orient people through interpretive spaces to foreground the history of the land and water before providing access to the river. Recreation must not bypass the history and the cultural context of the watershed.

The GreenWorks team is assisting and supporting the process and is prepared to provide iterative construction documents led by cultural managers, for the traditional cultural properties now freed from inundation.

Each proposal has been led by the concerned tribe/nation allowing cultural continuity to be the priority, featuring several amenities, including picnic and restroom facilities, boat ramps, trails, parking, and interpretive exhibits.

Designer position after the questions

3.5

Reorienting Outcome aims through Matunga's theory

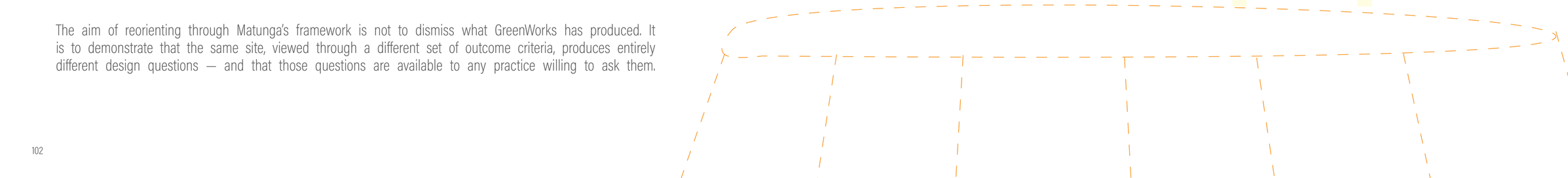
The GreenWorks project description frames the Lower Klamath sites through the outcomes of recreational access — boat ramps, trails, picnic facilities, and interpretive exhibits delivered to a public that includes tribal nations, agencies, and recreational interest groups as equivalent stakeholders (GreenWorks, n.d.). These are mitigation outcomes: amenities that replace what dam removal takes away from existing users. They are not relational outcomes. They do not ask what the land is becoming for the people it is being returned to.

Matunga (2013) argues that Indigenous planning produces a distinct set of outcomes irreducible to Western planning's framework of public amenity, ecological performance, or economic growth. Those outcomes are: cultural protection and enhancement; environmental quality and quantity; social cohesion and wellbeing; economic growth and distribution; and political autonomy and advocacy (pp. 26–48). Applying this framework to Kikacéki shifts each of the GreenWorks outcome categories into a different register.

Cultural protection and enhancement means that the boat launch site is not primarily a public access point — it is a re-entry into a cultural landscape that has been submerged for over a century. Every design decision at the water's edge is a decision about how that re-entry happens, who it happens for, and what it makes possible for the Shasta Indian Nation's ceremonial and stewardship practices. Environmental quality and quantity means that sediment, hydrology, and revegetation are not restoration metrics to be managed toward a target — they are conditions that the Nation's eco-cultural practices depend on and, in turn, help maintain. Social cohesion and wellbeing means that the return of salmon, the revival of ceremony, and the engagement of youth at the site are not secondary benefits of recreation infrastructure — they are the primary outcomes the design should be oriented toward. Economic growth and distribution means asking whose livelihoods are supported by what gets built, and whether the seasonal village cluster model generates economic conditions that flow through the Nation rather than past it. Political autonomy and advocacy means that the design process must align with Shasta governance authority and the cadence of the land return — not with project deadlines set by agencies.

The aim of reorienting through Matunga's framework is not to dismiss what GreenWorks has produced. It is to demonstrate that the same site, viewed through a different set of outcome criteria, produces entirely different design questions — and that those questions are available to any practice willing to ask them.

Outcome aim	What it means at Kikacéki	Indicators	Possible design implications
Cultural protection & enhancement	Ceremony safety and cultural continuity are foundational.	Protected ceremonial zones; controlled visibility; continuity of practice across seasons and generations.	Sightline control away from power infrastructure; quiet zones; restricted corridors; material choices aligned with protocols.
Environmental quality & quantity	River reorganization supports ecological function without overriding cultural relationships.	Stabilization where needed; process based riparian complexity led by cultural managers	Planting zones keyed to ceremony
Social cohesion & well-being	Land return supports community presence, youth learning, intergenerational practice.	Spaces/routes that support gathering, teaching, and everyday practices tied to the land and river	Youth learning loop; seasonal gathering clearings; privacy gradients.
Economic growth & distribution	Economic activity must support and not trade away sovereignty or ceremony.	Benefits accrue under Shasta terms; minimize dependency on external recreational economies	Keep recreation economy separate from ceremonial core; avoid "destination" framing
Political autonomy & advocacy	Shasta authority is operational, not symbolic.	Clear governance control points; protocols respected; decisions not overridden by agencies/consultants.	Access/thresholds defined by governance; signage/ interpretation controlled or refused.



3.5

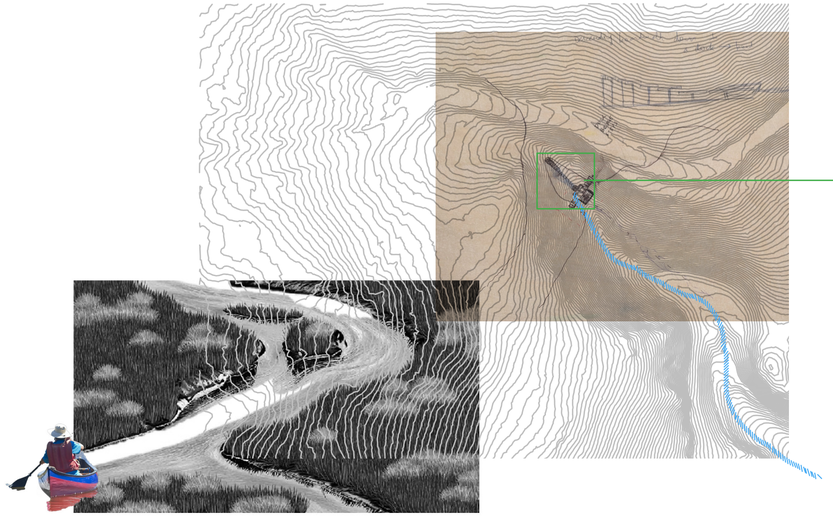
Reorienting Outcome Aims at the Boat Launch Site

The boat launch exists because the state required it and safety dictated its location. That necessity is not in question. What is in question is what the site is understood to be for.

Currently it is oriented around industrial recreation — HDPE ramps, parking, managed public access — the material outcomes of a mitigation logic. Matunga's framework shifts this. Asking whose future the site serves produces a different material outcome entirely. The boat launch becomes not a terminus for recreational river access but the entry point of a canoe culture — and canoe culture is not a 'waiting to be funded' cultural craft project. It is a landscape planning system.

A canoe requires cedar/sugar pine, which in turn requires a forest tended over generations through burning, seasonal presence, and harvesting protocols that sustain both the tree and the knowledge of how to work it. Canoe making requires intergenerational transmission — elders, youth, time, and a place. Each of these is a spatial and temporal planning condition. Taken together they describe a network of forest stewardship, seasonal settlement, and living ecological knowledge of which the boat launch is only the visible edge.

Recreation must fund this system rather than displace it. The state-mandated launch generates visitor presence and potential revenue. Oriented through Shasta Indian Nation governance, that revenue must be directed to support the landscapes burning practices, seasonal camps and the canoe-making traditions that constitute the real infrastructure of the site. Industrial boats/kayaks and crafted canoes can coexist at the same ramp — but the planning logic organizing the site must sustain the canoe culture rather than merely accommodating it as cultural color within a recreation program.



Pointing at the state necessitated rafting site Sami said - ".....I don't mind recreation, but the location of the recreation site is what matters. This particular site.....it is where it is because it is at the entrance to the canyon where the rapids are." Necessity and public safety dictated the location of this site as explained by Sami.

Indigenous Planning as Outcome

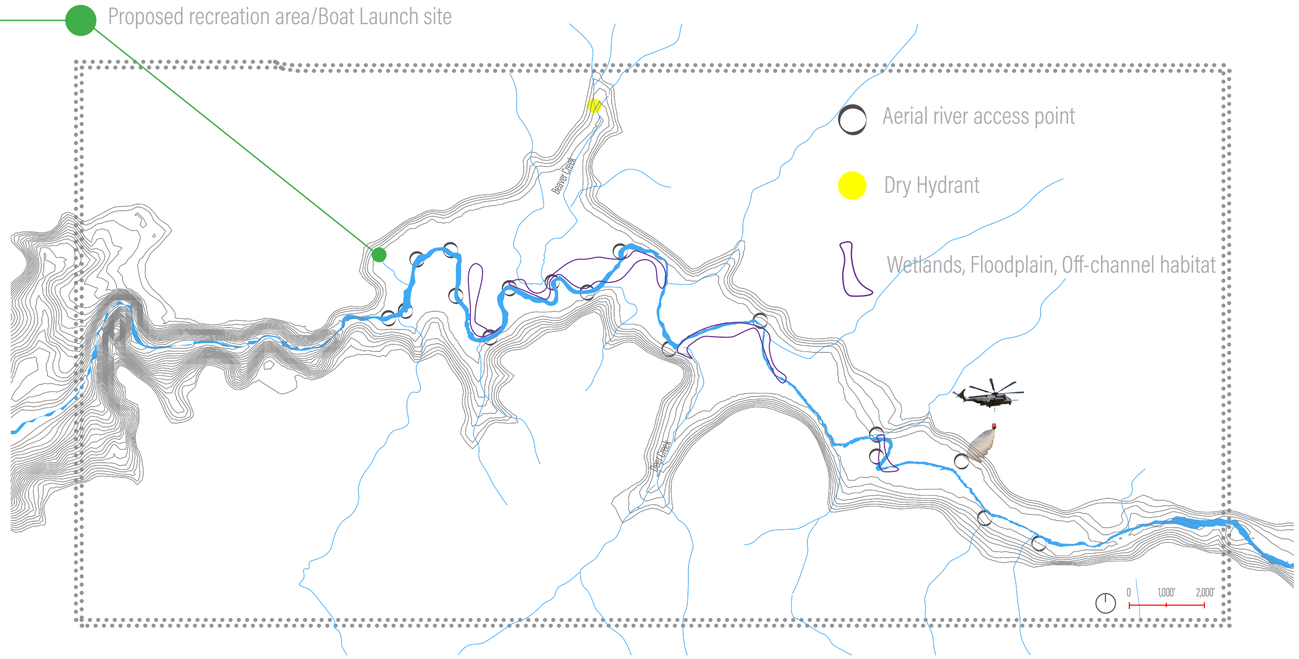
Cultural protection & enhancement

Environmental quality & quantity

Social cohesion & well-being

Economic growth & distribution

Political autonomy & advocacy

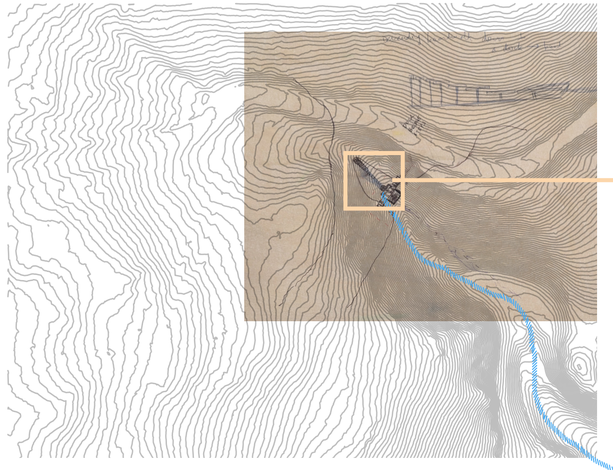


3.5

Reorienting Outcome Aims at the Boat Launch Site

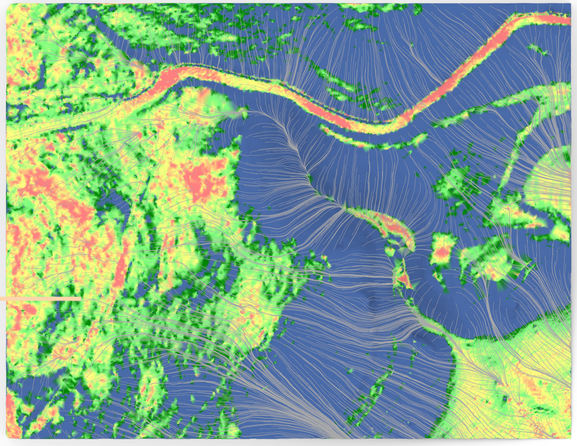
Asking Critical questions	Indigenous Planning as Outcome
Whose future?	Cultural protection & enhancement
Where are Indigenous people positioned?	Environmental quality & quantity
Whose knowledge counts?	Social cohesion & well-being
Whose methods?	Economic growth & distribution
Who decides?	Political autonomy & advocacy

Before Framework



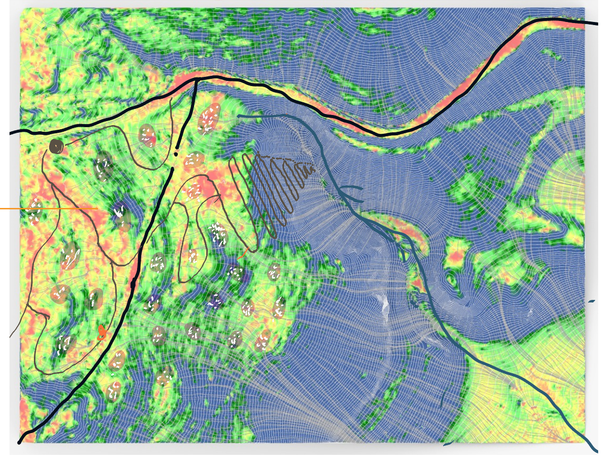
Treating the boat launch area as a state necessitated recreation site to be accessed

Analyzing the site topography and hydrology



After Framework

Arriving at a relational connection through interpreting the history of the river and allowing recreation, but not without the weight of the historical/cultural context it sits within



The design process began where it typically begins — topographic analysis, path of least resistance to minimize landform disturbance, working with slope and drainage to determine where access is feasible and material considerations for access and longevity. These are legitimate questions. But when the framework shifts, the path is no longer being drawn through a landform. It is being drawn through a relational system that is still emerging — and the interpretive trail becomes something different from a fixed route through a site.

It becomes an activated space for discourse. A landscape that holds and circulates stories, voices, and relationships. What moves through it is not just visitors/tourists but a people - from different nations, different watersheds — connected by the experience of tending landscapes that colonial systems have attempted to sever them from. Trans-Indigenous exchange here is not 'slacktivist' solidarity; it is the sharing of craft, knowledge, process, and access — canoe makers, basketweavers, fire practitioners, language holders — whose different relationships to different landscapes illuminate the process around rebuilding a relational watershed.

The space/place changes because the conversations change and because the landscape changes — with season, with water, with burning and regrowth. That movement of people and ideas also generates the flow of revenue, attention, and accountability that brings agencies and governing bodies into alignment with the future the Nation is building. The path is the mechanism through which that vision becomes undeniable — not through declaration but through the participation and engagement of people who understand what this place is becoming and why it matters.

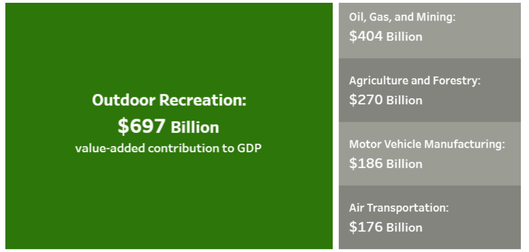
3.5

Reorienting Outcome Aims at the Boat Launch Site

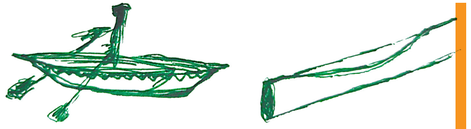
Carving opportunities for cultural continuity

Breaking away from the fueling of petrochemical industry through High-Density Polyethylene vessels for recreation on indigenous grounds - to find a path restoring the cultural practice of making canoes.

Recreation as a by-product of industrial expansion



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



Culture as a by-product of a sustained relationship with the landscape

Attempts towards nostalgic cultural restoration without trying to plan a landscape system that can sustain such practices are bound to fail. It cannot be looked at as a project but must be established as a relational practice where the landscape is spatially planned for and materially directed to support the craft. The conversation between the nations and tribes to collectively make Klamath river a crafted canoe watershed where HDPE and other industrially manufactured boats are gradually phased out - where recreation supports cultural continuity not corporate greed. Recreation interest groups and tribes/nations can find grounds and waters to relationally shift how people perceive rivers and rafting.

"...to study the canoe and cultural renaissance.....has become to go "to India to study worship, circum-Mediterranean region for honor and shame, China for ancestor worship and so on..." (Case 2021, pp. 75)

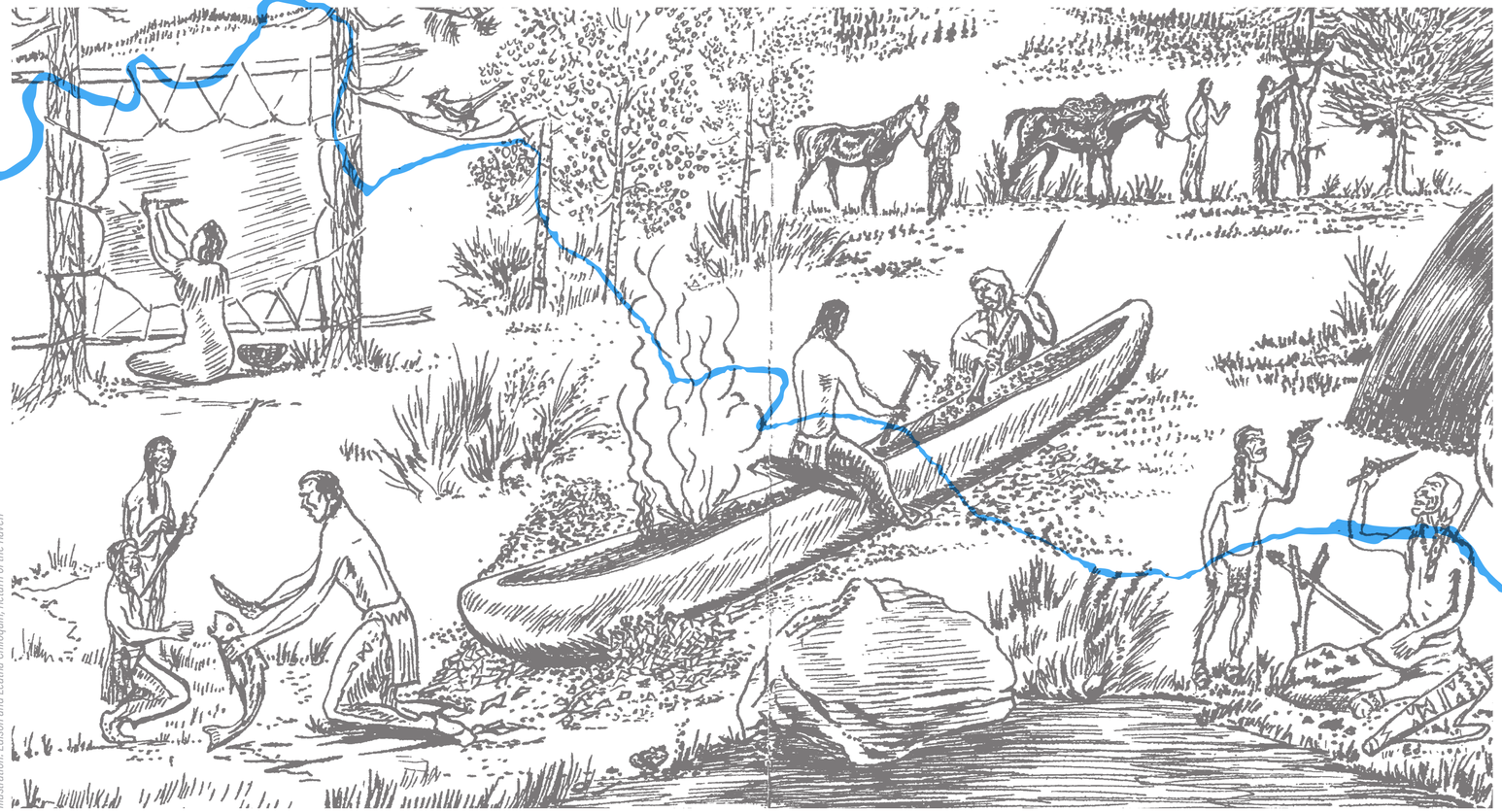


Illustration: Edison and Leatha Chiloquin, Return of the Raven

3.5

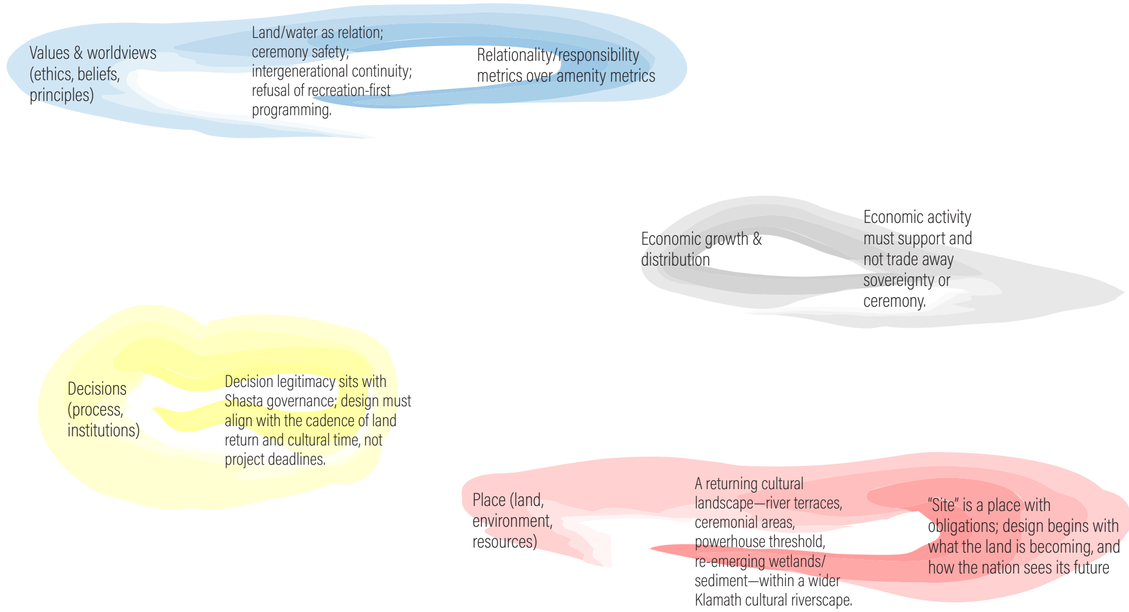
Reorienting Outcome Aims at the Boat Launch Site

From Recreation toward Relation

Sugar pine íkhui (canoes) were sometimes made by the Shasta people and other times purchased from Yurok (yoch) and Karuk (páah) Nations. Can Kikaceki become a place for restoring these relationships and working towards a landscape that enables and can sustain the craft of collective canoe making? *The first Karuk-built dugout canoe in 60 years was paddled around the Klamath River* recently and this boat launch site could turn into a space for the tribes to come together to collectively work on reviving not only the craft of canoe making, but imagine a future where the landscape sustains the practice through long term planning and asserting rights to sustainably and transparently use sugar pine and other trees necessary to continue this practice. Shared ceremonies and other possible collaborations could emerge from this site that was restricted with a recreation centric design lens which lacked the relational connections made through cultural histories.

"Transportation along the rivers and streams is essential to Yurok ceremonial activity. One of the most important aspects of Yurok technology was the river and ocean-going canoe or yoch, which were carved from selected redwood trees."

Yurok Tribe's Comments on the Lower Klamath Project License Surrender DEIR



"You can't just go find old growth sugar pine trees anymore because most of them have been logged," Shelton(Nature Rights Council) said. "Because the Tribe does not have a reservation, most of those trees are on Forest Service land and people can't just go out and harvest one like they would have done traditionally."

In Karuk culture, canoes have been historically understood as part of the family, providing transportation through waterways which were once the main mode of travel. According to McAllister (lead carver), being a canoe maker was a big responsibility because it meant taking care of the people around them in the community.

"Our deceased folks, we would put them in the boats and paddle them to their gravesites," McAllister said. "We would have boats for ceremonial purposes, like for our World Renewal Ceremonies that we practice. For the Boat Dance, there's a dance that takes place in the boat, those were bigger boats, and we're hoping to actually get one of those built pretty soon."

The first Karuk-built dugout canoe in 60 years was paddled around the Klamath River

James Kelley/IPR News

"We're restoring something that has been stolen," Houston said. "We're not stopping with just this one. We have plans to build more. We're going to be getting trees to build Port Orford cedar canoes and more sugar pine canoes, and we might even do redwood. We have the manpower and the drive to bring these relatives back to our water."

Excerpt from: https://www.ijpr.org/music-arts-and-culture/2024-08-02/karuk-tribe-launches-first-dugout-canoe-in-klamath-river-in-60-years

3.6

Meandering towards Continuity

Sugar pine canoes— íkhui in Shasta — was the material basis of Shasta canoe making. Canoes were sometimes built by Shasta people themselves and other times obtained through trade with the Yurok (yoch) and Karuk (páah) Nations, whose canoe traditions ran deep in the same watershed. These were not transactions between strangers. They were exchanges between nations whose territories, languages, ceremonies, and craft traditions were already in ongoing conversation along the Klamath. The boat launch site at Kikacéki — state-mandated, recreation-oriented, designed around the HDPE raft and the recreational user — sits at the threshold of that history without yet knowing it.

The first Karuk-built dugout canoe in sixty years was recently paddled on the Klamath River. That event is not only a cultural milestone. It is a planning signal. It demonstrates that the knowledge, the will, and the relational networks necessary to revive canoe making across the watershed are alive — and that what is now needed are the landscape conditions to sustain the practice over generations. Kikacéki could be that place. Not a site where canoes are displayed or demonstrated as cultural programming appended to a recreation infrastructure, but a place where the Shasta, Karuk, and Yurok Nations come together to collectively build, launch, and restore the relational systems that canoe making requires and expresses.

Sustaining canoe making is a long-term landscape planning commitment. Sugar pine, cedar must be identified, stewarded, and harvested through transparent and legally protected protocols — which means asserting Indigenous rights to forest resources that currently sit within National Forest boundaries administered by the US Forest Service. This is where the hard boundary between reservation land, trust parcels, and federally managed parks becomes a material obstacle rather than an administrative abstraction. The Shasta Indian Nation holds Parcel B. The sugar pine they need may stand on land they do not manage. Dissolving that boundary — or at minimum creating the policy mechanisms for relational management across it — is a precondition for the canoe future the site makes possible.

This is where park thinning regimes become relevant. The US Forest Service already conducts thinning operations in the Klamath National Forest for fire management purposes. Those regimes are currently organized around fuel reduction metrics and ecological targets determined through western forest management frameworks. If those thinning decisions were instead informed by Indigenous-led relational management — by the Shasta Indian Nation, the Karuk Tribe, and the Yurok Tribe identifying which trees to take, when, and how, in accordance with protocols that sustain both the forest and the craft — the thinning operation becomes something different. It becomes a material act of decolonization: returning the forest to the governance of the people who managed it for millennia, and feeding the craft traditions that settler systems deliberately destroyed through fire suppression, forced assimilation, and the removal of Indigenous people from their forests.

The boat launch site cannot accomplish this alone. But it can be the place where the argument becomes visible — where the canoe on the water makes the forest politics legible, where shared ceremony between nations makes the relational history of the watershed present, and where a recreation-centric design is reoriented toward the living network of obligations, exchanges, and futures it was always capable of holding.

iv.
Concluding Reflections

Linda Tuhiwai Smith reminds us that for many Indigenous communities, research remains deeply entangled with histories of extraction, misrepresentation, and colonial authority. Research is therefore not neutral. It carries responsibilities that extend beyond knowledge production. This project has attempted to navigate those responsibilities by working from an Indigenous paradigm informed by relational accountability, Indigenous planning theory, and Indigenous governance.

For Margaret Kovach, Indigenous methodologies are grounded in relationship. Knowledge emerges through relationships between people, land, story, and community rather than through detached observation. Listening therefore becomes more than information gathering; it becomes a commitment to accountability. The listener carries responsibilities to the relationships that make knowledge possible.

Similarly, Shawn Wilson argues that knowledge itself is relational. Within this framework, research is not about extracting information from participants but about entering and maintaining relationships. The validity of the work is measured not only through outcomes but through the quality of the relationships sustained throughout the process. Listening is therefore an act of participation within a network of relationships rather than a method for acquiring data.

Hirini Matunga's work extends this relational understanding into planning and design practice. Indigenous planning is grounded in Indigenous authority, values, and decision-making structures. For planners and landscape architects, listening becomes a way of understanding governance rather than merely understanding place. The role of the designer is not to determine futures independently, but to orient themselves within existing systems of responsibility, authority, and care.

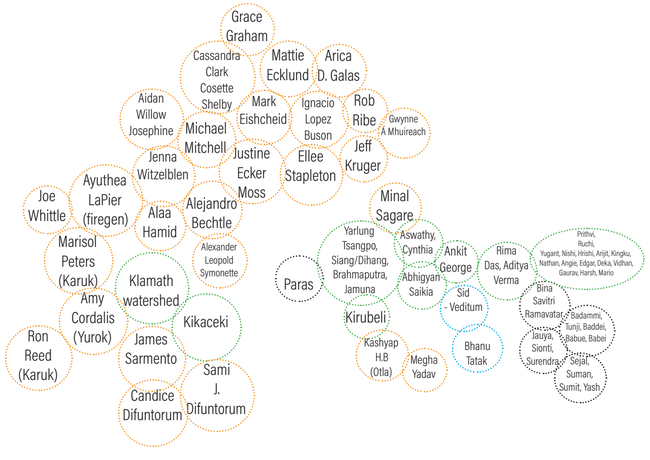
This understanding shaped the trajectory of this project. The direct ask from Sami Jo Difuntorum was specific: to consider ways of screening the power infrastructure visible from the ceremonial pit. When conversations later paused during a sensitive stage of the land return process, listening required accepting that pause rather than seeking additional information or expanding the scope of engagement. The pause itself became part of the methodology. Rather than pushing for answers, the work shifted toward understanding the broader planning conditions surrounding Kikacéki and examining how landscape architecture might better orient itself within Indigenous-led projects.

Through this process, listening became a method of restraint as much as engagement. It shaped what questions could be asked, what assumptions could be made, and what interventions could be proposed.

One outcome of this listening process was a reconsideration of recreation itself. When relationships become the focus, recreation is no longer understood solely as access infrastructure for leisure. Through Matunga's framework, recreation can instead become a vehicle for cultural continuity, stewardship, craft, and governance. This shift opens possibilities for new relationships across the Klamath watershed. The restoration of canoe-making traditions, collaboration between the Shasta, Karuk, and Yurok nations and recreation groups, and the long-term aspiration of a river less dependent on industrial recreation infrastructure all emerge from asking different questions about what recreation is meant to support.

The project therefore concludes not with a definitive design solution but with an orientation. Listening, understood through Kovach, Wilson, and Matunga, becomes a way of working that prioritizes relationship before intervention, governance before design, and continuity before project completion. Kikacéki remains a landscape in transition. The work presented here is one moment within a much longer conversation between people, land, water, language, and time.

v.
Acknowledgements



References

(APA 7th Edition)

Akins, D. B., & Bauer, W. J., Jr. (2021). We are the land: A history of Native California. University of California Press.

Beason, T. (2024, June 21). Newsom backs tribal land return amid dam removal project. Los Angeles Times.

Bereano, N. K. (1983). Introduction. In A. Lorde, Sister outsider: Essays and speeches. Crossing Press.

Bishop, R. (1999, June). Collaborative storytelling: Meeting Indigenous people's desires for self-determination [Paper presentation]. World Indigenous People's Conference, Albuquerque, NM, United States.

Case, E. (2021). Everything ancient was once new: Indigenous persistence from Hawaii to Kahiki. University of Hawaii Press.

Chiloquin, E., & Chiloquin, L. (2023). Return of the raven.

Cordalis, A. B. (2025). The water remembers: My Indigenous family's fight to save a river and a way of life. Little, Brown and Company.

Diver, S., Oberholzer Dent, J. R., Sarna-Wojcicki, D., Reed, R., & Dill-De Sa, C. (2024). Recasting Klamath dam removal as eco-cultural revitalization and restorative justice through Karuk tribal leadership. Water, 16(16), Article 2295. https://doi.org/10.3390/w16162295

Gilio-Whitaker, D. (2019). As long as grass grows: The Indigenous fight for environmental justice, from colonization to Standing Rock. Beacon Press.

Grable, J. (2023, October 15). After a century of displacement, Shasta Indian Nation sees hope in dam removal. Jefferson Public Radio.

Hall, L., Dell, C. A., Fornssler, B., Hopkins, C., Mushquash, C., & Rowan, M. (2015). Research as cultural renewal: Applying Two-Eyed Seeing in a research project about cultural interventions in First Nations addictions treatment. The International Indigenous Policy Journal, 6(2), 1–15.

Jefferson Public Radio. (2024, August 2). Karuk Tribe launches first dugout canoe in Klamath River in 60 years. Jefferson Public Radio. https://www.ijpr.org/music-arts-and-culture/2024-08-02/karuk-tribe-launches-first-dugout-canoe-in-klamath-river-in-60-years

Klamath River Renewal Corporation. (2022, May). Lower Klamath Project: Historic properties management plan (HPMP).

Kovach, M. (2009). Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts. University of Toronto Press.

Kovach, M. (2019). Conversational method in Indigenous research. First Peoples Child & Family Review, 14(1), 123–136. https://doi.org/10.7202/1071291ar

Lonnberg, A. (1981). The Digger Indian stereotype in California. Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology, 3(2), 278–283.

Mathur, A., & da Cunha, D. (2009). SOAK: Mumbai in an estuary. Rupa & Co.

Matunga, H. (2013). Theorizing Indigenous planning. In R. Walker, T. Jojola, & D. Natcher (Eds.), Reclaiming Indigenous planning (pp. 3–32). McGill-Queen's University Press.

Native Arts and Cultures Foundation. (n.d.). Ayuthea LaPier. Native Arts and Cultures Foundation.

Paik, J., Teppema, A., & Vero, W. (n.d.). Unmapping the Klamath Basin: Settler colonial impacts on health of land and people. In The red book: Collective essays on settler colonialism.

Rawal, S. (Director). (2020). Gather [Film]. Gather Productions.

Sarmento, J. D. (2021). The Shasta language: A one-hundred year conversation [Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Davis].

Sustainable Northwest, Klamath River Renewal Corporation, & Swiftwater Films. (n.d.). Project and media materials on Klamath River restoration.

Thomas, R. (2005). Honouring the oral traditions of my ancestors through storytelling. In L. Brown & S. Strega (Eds.), Research as resistance: Critical, Indigenous and anti-oppressive approaches (pp. 237–254). Canadian Scholars Press.

Thompson, B. (2024, November 4). Personal accounts of the Klamath [Zoom talk].

Thompson, J. (2008). Hede kehe'hotzi'kahidi': My journey to a Tahltan research paradigm. Canadian Journal of Native Education, 31(1), 24–39.

Treaty of 1864. (n.d.). Treaty of 1864. https://www.treatyof1864.org/treaty-of-1864

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1(1), 1–40.

White, R. (1995). The organic machine: The remaking of the Columbia River. Hill and Wang.

Wilson, S. (2008). Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods. Fernwood Publishing.

Wylie, S. (2024). Something in the way: Interpreting historical frictions on the Upper Klamath River [Doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon].

Yurok Tribe. (n.d.). Comments on the Lower Klamath Project License Surrender DEIR.