

**Willamette River Bridge  
Phase 2, Design Enhancements**

**Finalist Proposal Submission  
rhiza A+D  
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## OVERVIEW

### **Camas / Canoe / Confluence - Whilamut Passage Design Enhancements**

The river is transformation - a carving, weaving, and flowing.

**In a car it goes by fast** - momentary landscapes, a house, a city, and stories - like water under a bridge. A glimpse of something can find a home in one's internal landscape. The place persists because it connects to a deeper current, a broader story, a shared landscape.

**We choose the canoe, the coyote and the camas** as manifestations of the river and as central inspirations for our sculptures because they are potent living symbols of Kalapuya culture and because they resonate for all residents of the Willamette Valley.

The Kalapuyan **canoe** is specific to this river: carved from a single red cedar, it belongs to the landscape; its shape reflects and fits the wide curves and the shallow ripples of Whilamut. "Gudakut," the Kalapuyan canoe that is the inspiration for our largest piece, is built for lighter travel, for spreading news via the river - *for telling stories*

Speaking of which, **Coyote** is a transformative character in Kalapuyan stories. In "Coyote Releases Water Dammed Up by the Frogs," Coyote frees water from the frogs to create rivers and streams for all.

Where the river ripples and runs fast the landscape transforms from foothill to fertile plain, from volcanic to alluvial geology. The Willamette Valley is a repository of fertile alluvial silt where the forces of nature scrape and slide to expose volcanic tors like islands in the landscape. Here the river would rise and expand to a mile wide. When the water receded the floodplain would flower and appear like a blue lake -dense with **camas** blooms. As a food staple for the Kalapuya and a valuable trade item, the **camas** signifies local ecology, collective growth, and recognition that land, river, and culture flourish together.

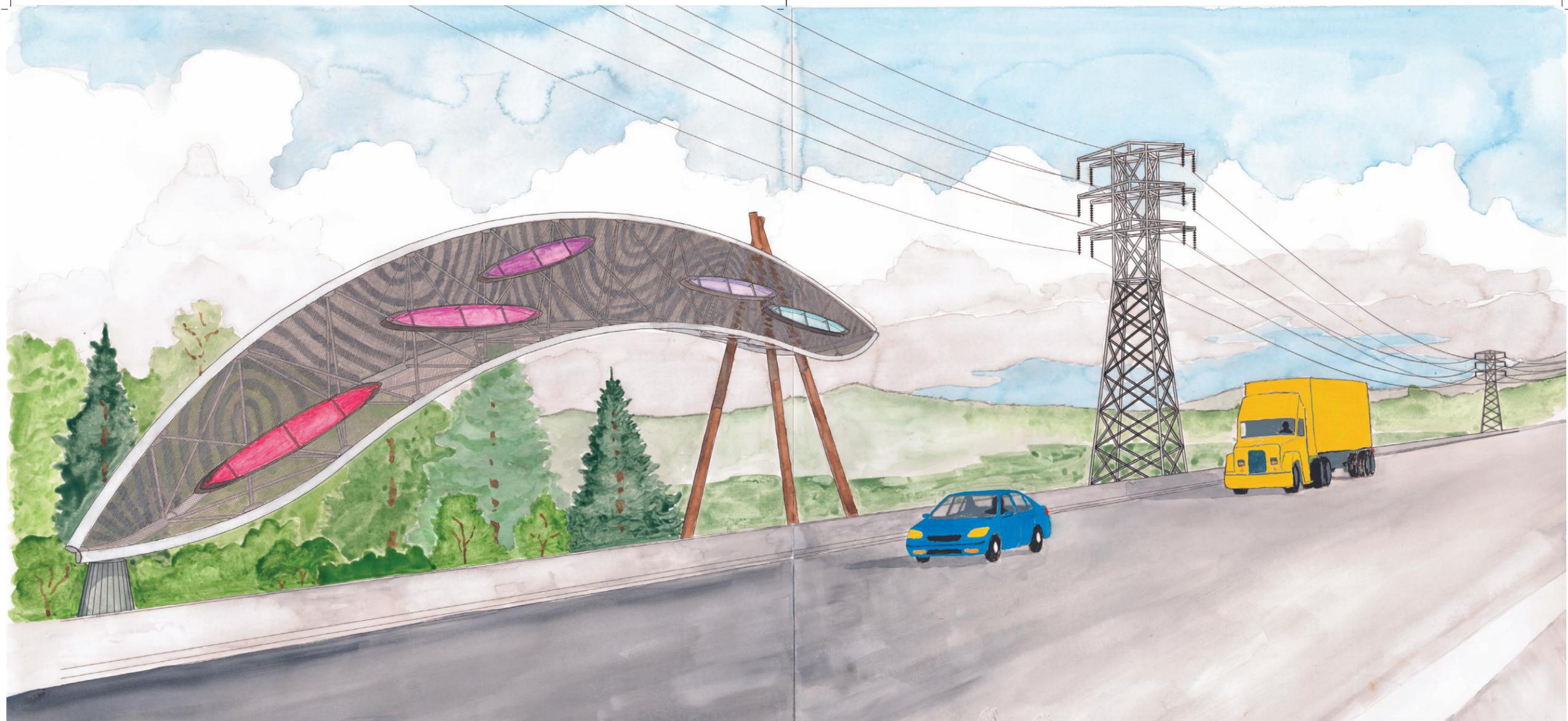
Three (3) sculptures celebrate the crossing of Whilamut - *where the water ripples and runs fast*:

The foothills gateway - **Canoe Current**, the river signpost - **River Marker**, the valley gateway - **Camas Basket**.

**Canoe Current** is located on the northeast side of the bridge. Fabricated from galvanized steel, it is a curved triangular truss 80 feet long. An arc in the sky, its shape suggests: a rainbow, the approaching hills, the sweeping curves of the river, and the arches of the bridge. The highway-side face tilts toward the sky and is comprised of galvanized steel expanded metal panels attached at the front and back faces so a fluid moiré pattern is experienced by passing motorists. Nested in this flow are the shapes of 5 Kalapuyan canoes - as seen from a bridge or by a bird. The canoes hold colors ranging from the orange of burning embers (homage to Kalapuyan pyroculture) to the violet of a camas blossom to the celadon blue of water. The grouping of the canoes suggests community while the arc and the dappled light and fluid surface patten conjures the continuous river.

**River Marker** is sited where the highway bridge launches into air and the foothills. It looks over and is visible from the Whilamut Natural Area and Knickerbocker Bike/Pedestrian Bridge below. The conical base of the sculpture is formed of a spiral of figures: coyote, frog and fish, retelling the creation story of *Coyote releasing the Waters* in an incised and punched metal pictograph. Atop the marker flows a segment of the river, a multi-layered hydroscape made of polished, laser cut stainless steel sheets reflecting light and color, echoing the rippling water and light below.

**Camas Basket**, on the south side of the bridge, marks the transition from foothill to fertile valley. The vertical, organic piece sprouts in a planted peninsula between on-ramp and highway. It speaks to the future as an ode to growth and change. Emerging from the ground at the edge of the river, segmented, reed-like galvanized steel stalks bow to hold a camas basket-in-the-making. This open and growing structure is twined together with ribbons of steel, inspired by Kalapuyan basketry techniques. It has a decorated woven steel band like that seen on the burden basket at the University of Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History. Above this, vertical steel "fibrous reeds" combine with camas stems rising from its outer edge. They stretch towards the sun and are capped by blossoms of deeply saturated camas blue.



A living river culture



Trade and basketry



Land management with fire



The great Camas



# CANOE CURRENT

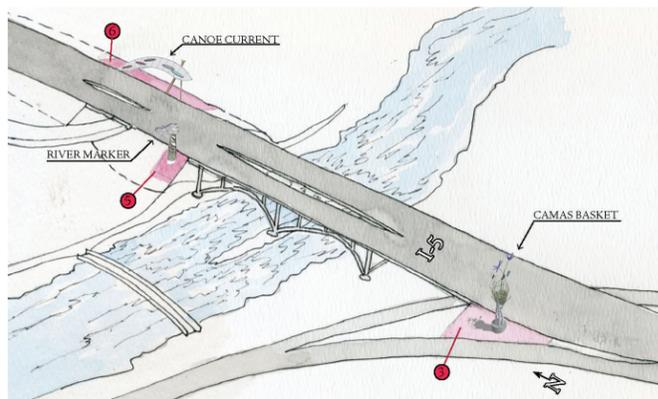
...carved for the Whilamut...



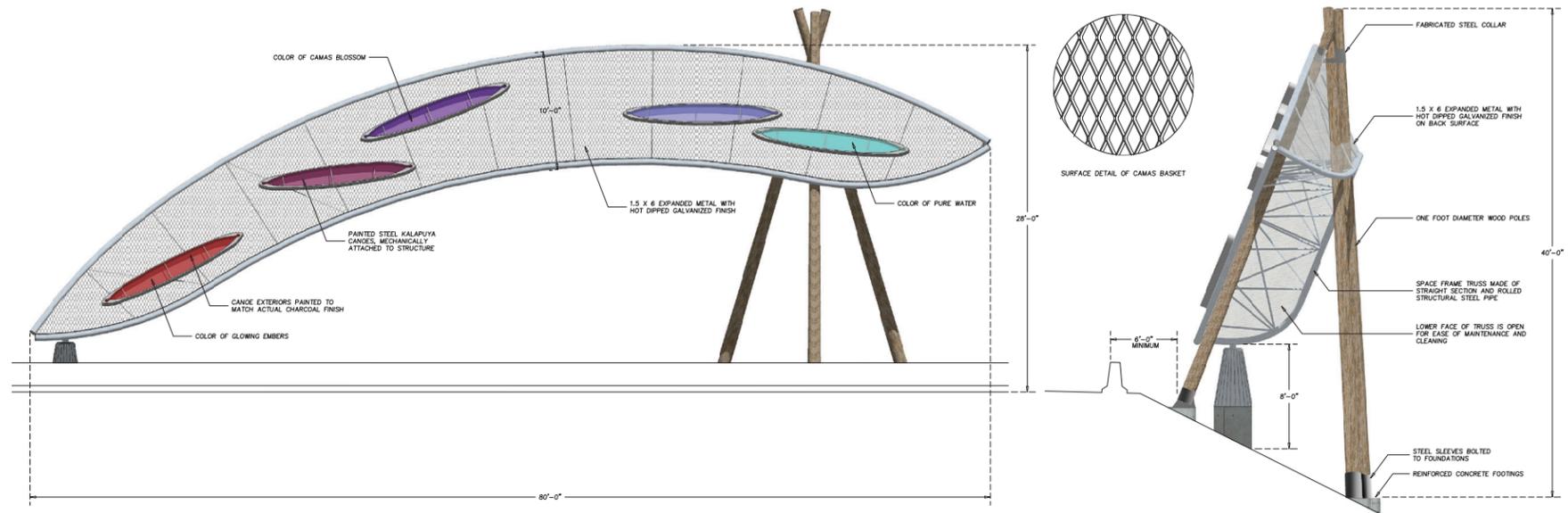
...to navigate its broad curves...

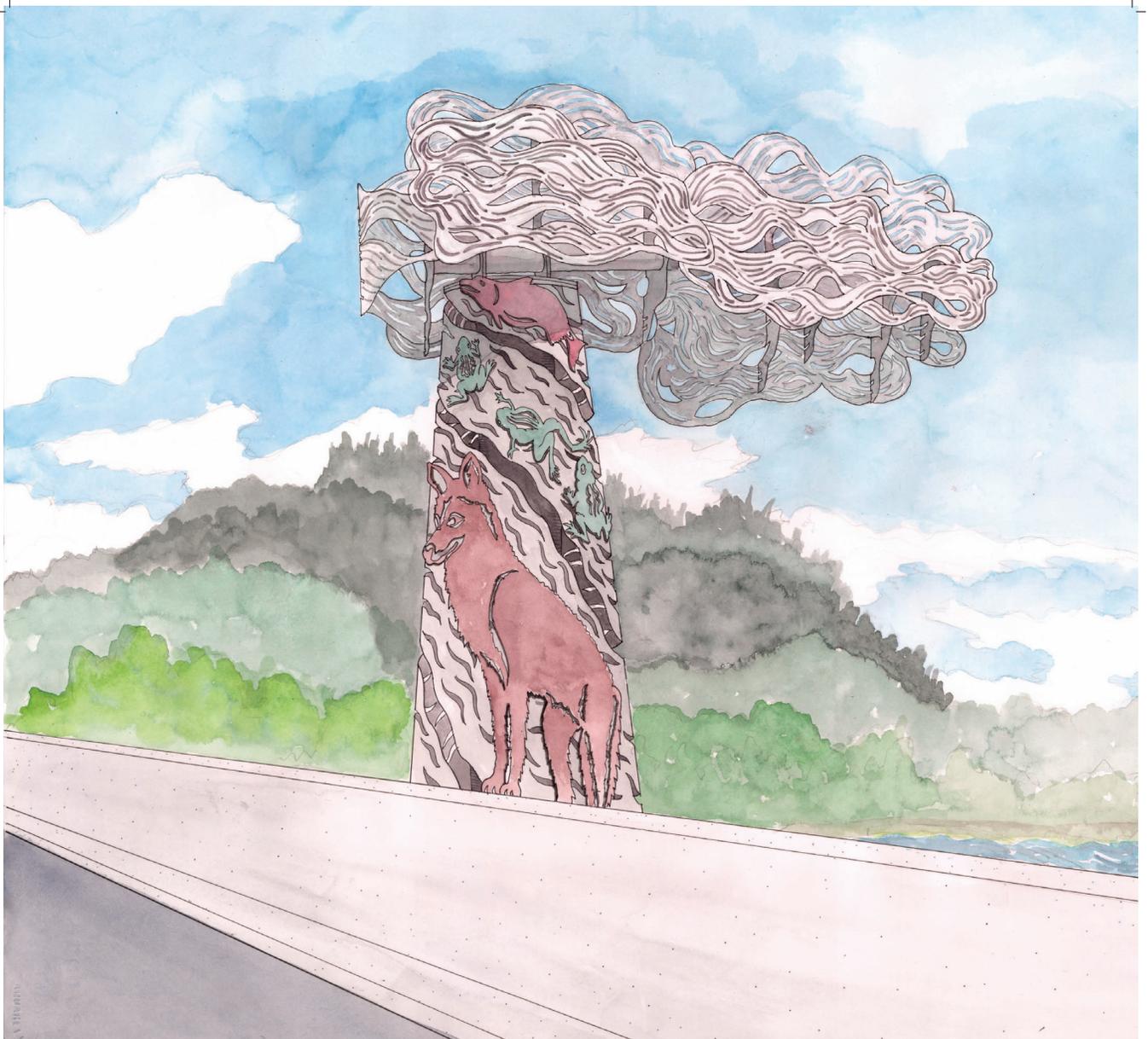


...and it's rippling waters



Key Plan





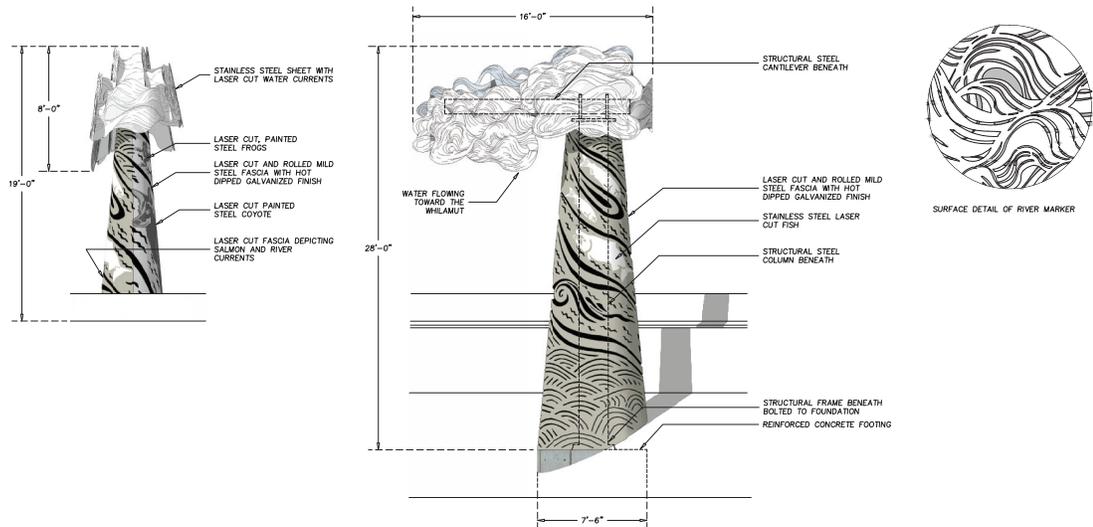
The river is a carving, woven flow.

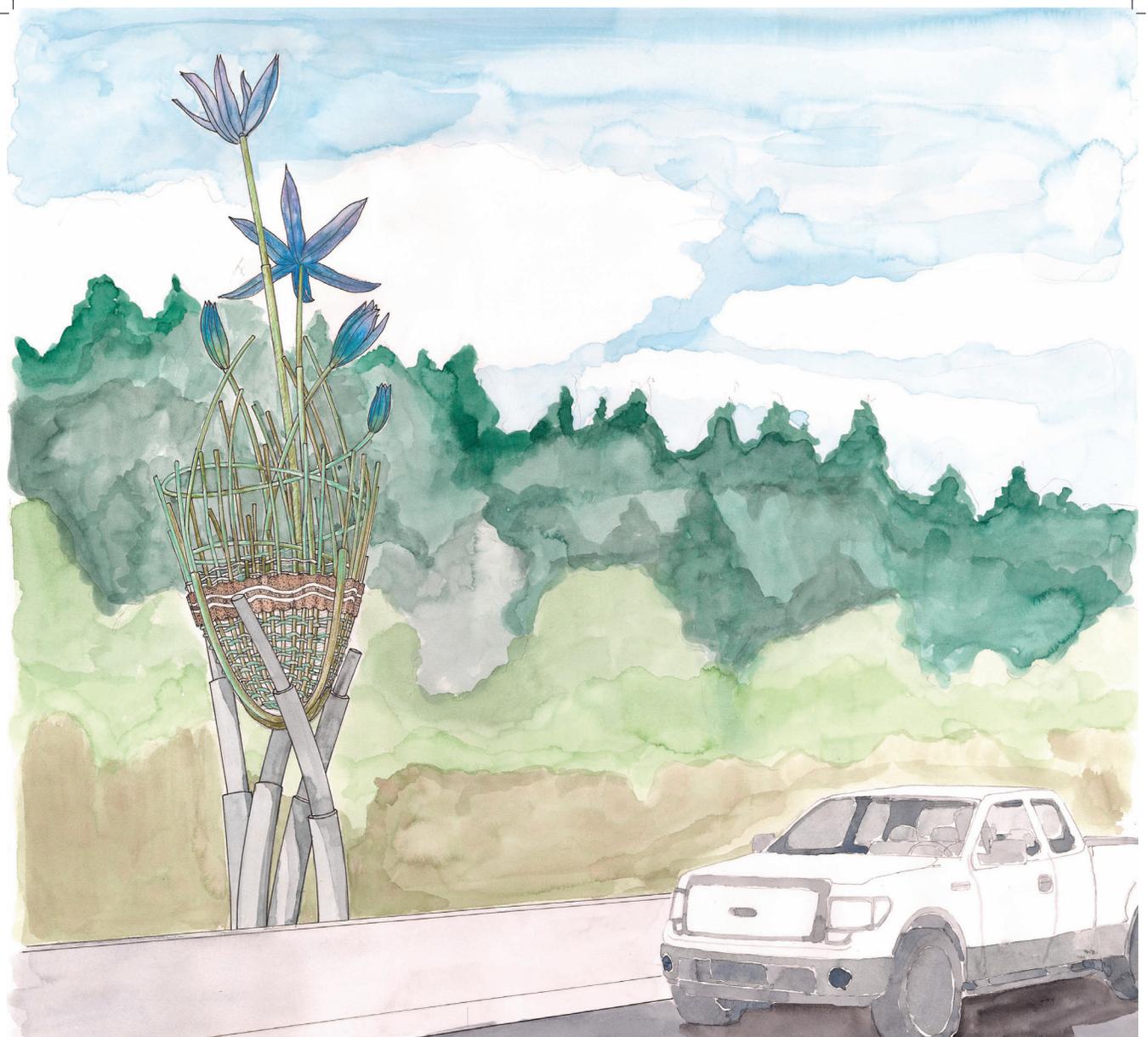


...Coyote was digging out under the dam all the time he had his head under water. When he was finished, he stood up and said, "That was a good drink. That was just what I needed." Then the dam collapsed, and the water went out into the valley and made the creeks and rivers and waterfalls..

- excerpted from "Coyote releases water from the Frogs," a Kalapuya story

## RIVER MARKER

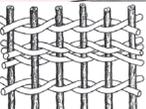




Cone-shaped Kalapuya burden basket



Open & closed "S" twist weft twining



Reeds at water's edge.



# CAMAS BASKET

