



The Trail
Foundation

ARTS COMMISSION
Butler Trail Arts + Culture Plan Progress
July 28, 2022



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Engagement - In Progress

- Common Waters Event Held May 14
- Completed on-line survey & intercept interviews
- Next Engagement Event Fall 2022

Research and Analysis

- Near Completion

Next Up - Plan Development

- August Start





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Event Day Collaborations with:
PARD Zilker Vision Plan & WPD Rain to River
Future Front X Sustain the Mag
Art Spark/Body Shift



Local Artist Team -
Rejina Thomas, Ruben Esquivel & Taylor Davis





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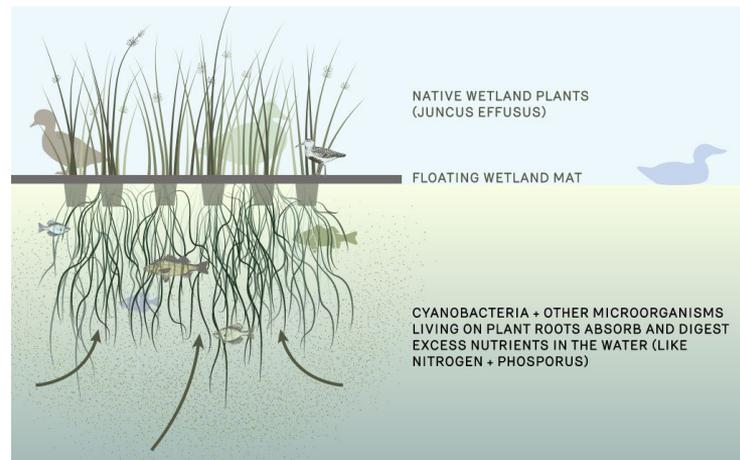
Common Waters is a celebration of community exploration in co-creating an art installation to inform The Trail Foundation's Art + Culture Plan.

The project explores the intersection of art, activism, environment and community while highlighting the beauty and demonstrating importance of Lady Bird Lake, our city's life line.

The wetland is comprised of two components:

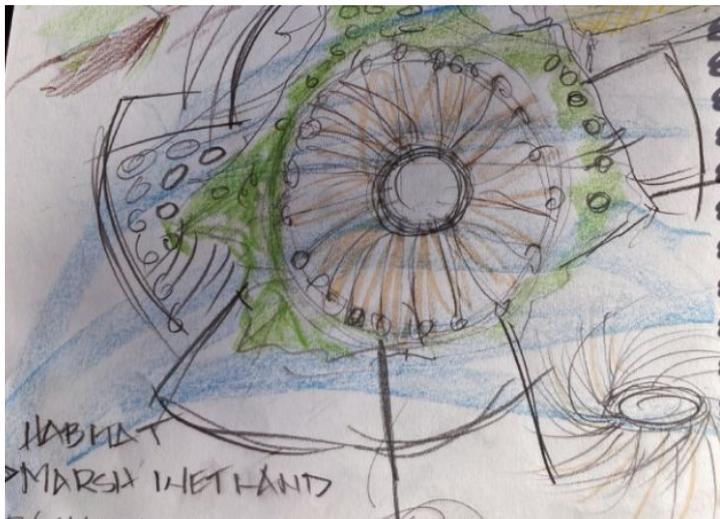
- the wetland mat
- a natural sculpture that takes the shape of a nest.
 - Dried invasive bamboo, symbolizes, the rapidly spreading change that the city faces today.

Floating wetlands are a way of harnessing the filtering action of nature and bring it to urban waterways, like Lady Bird Lake. Seven native species were planted and as they grow, the roots of these plants will create surfaces for microbial action to breakdown the excess nutrients and contaminants in the lake.





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Nests are symbols of safety, home, and protection.

This nest serves as the ephemeral shelter for a floating wetland of native plants that are designed to filter and clean toxins from the lake.

Similarly, when we protect the native Brown and Black communities of Austin, who have been the backbone of cultural creation for generations, we can also begin to clean the toxins of our city's ancestral trauma.

Common Waters is a reminder that Lady Bird Lake is an essential part of our city's identity and how we can come together as a community to protect it for future generations.

The natural world puts many demands on a built structure.

- Engineers worked out an anchoring system, to keep the wetlands from being swept away in the strong currents that occur when the lake floods.
- The location was chosen as one of the few expanses of shore line that are more sheltered from these flood currents.

COMMON WATERS



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How did this affect your sense of art and community?

I never thought I would build a nest! I learned a lot of stuff along the way and it empowered me as an artist. Now I feel I can do things that were once outside my scope

I have never been paid as an artist before I always had the tools of creating separated, but not interacting. On this project it all interacted

It was great to see what we could do in a short amount of time. And amazing to think of what you can get done in Austin if you have institutional support behind you

The experience of being approached by people who said they felt like the city was being reborn and hadn't been smothered by development. We could feel the love there and the sense that "Austin hasn't died"



Thoughts about Community involvement :

Find ways to involve the community that lives in East Austin and allow them to be part of the conversation

Get more community involvement with building and work days — maybe through lots of little projects

Get the prototype out into the community to make it visually available while it is being developed and make the prototype part of the access to participation

Creating a series of smaller projects that build up to a large one as a way of getting more community involvement

Need a dedicated work space—donated location like a building or a yard to build and experiment. Where people could watch the work progress.

More time for construction and fabrication and limiting time with figuring out materials



The enthusiastic group of artists, musicians, volunteers and trail peeps coming together to create and celebrate felt like Austin. A little bit of everything!

The comradery, positive vibes, diverse faces, and shared vision made this a notable event.



I loved seeing the different groups coming together around a common goal.

I really enjoyed the unique nature of the procession done the lake

Level of engagement of all present. Exciting to see the culmination (of just one step of the process) of so much hard, focused, dedicated work. Genuine joy at working together to see this happen!

I really enjoyed the blessing ceremony. It was fun to experience a different culture and learn more about it. It was cool that TTF thought to do something like this.



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Thank you!