

Ibach Park Storm Drain Mural



Did you know that Tualatin's storm drains all connect to the Tualatin River? In an effort to draw awareness to this fact, the City of Tualatin partnered with Tualatin Riverkeepers on a storm drain mural at Ibach Park.

Artist Lehuauakea Fernandez was selected by the Tualatin Arts Advisory Committee to complete the mural last summer.

The inspiration for the design was detailed in artist Lehuauakea Fernandez's proposal:

"The emphasis of the mural design is the significance of the Tualatin River within the larger water cycle from a Indigenous-Native Hawaiian perspective. The mural features a *kupu* (spiral form motif) that doubles as both a cascading river and a colorful rainbow, thus alluding to the critical role that waterways play in the overall health of our ecosystems.

The individual stripes of the rainbow or wave form feature various patterns from Native Hawaiian traditional textile arts (*'ohe Kapala*), each of which represent aquatic animals and river water motifs.

Furthermore, superimposed on the *kupu* form are small representations of western pond turtles and upper Willamette River run Steelhead, both of which are considered threatened species in the ecosystem and have significance to Indigenous tribes native to the Northwest region. Flanking the sides of the mural are cedar trees, which also have immense cultural significance to Native groups in this area, and contribute to the water cycle on land.

The widely unknown history of Native Hawaiians in the Pacific Northwest dates back as far as 1790, when communities of Kanaka Maoli settled in areas such as Fort Vancouver to take part in the thriving fur and salmon trades at the time. As a Native Hawaiian artist with roots also in the Pacific Northwest, I hope this mural alludes to the role that Kanaka Maoli have played on Oregon's waterways in the past. In addition, I aim to represent my culture, our language that nearly went extinct, and ultimately, our ways of thinking that teach us to care for our lands and waters in all aspects of life."