Lakes and Rivers

Design Intent

The local waterways await, with a new adventure around every corner. Stop for a moment and listen... can you tell a green tree frog's call from an American Bullfrog? See those crushed grasses? The birds are rustling around, making their nests. Look at how the ecosystem works together, a living breathing thing as it supports countless forms of life. So go explore: climb a tree, have a picnic on the water's edge, set out with your fishing gear in the quiet hours before dawn. The *Lakes & Rivers* are nature's playground, ready to be enjoyed by animals and people alike!

Technology Components

N/A

Mural Features

- Playground-Playgrounds are often found in parks, schools, childcare centers, and many other child-friendly locations. They are important in children's physical, cognitive, and social development.
- Soccer-Soccer is considered the world's most popular sport, with over 250 million players in more than 200 countries. Soccer is thought to have started in ancient China over 2,000 years ago and was known as Cuju.
- Fishing-Fishing is one of the oldest activities, dating back to 40,000 years ago. Early humans used spears and hooks made from bones or shells to fish. The whale shark is the biggest fish on Earth and can grow up to 40 feet long. Commercial fishing provides over 3 billion people with 20% of their daily animal protein.
- Tag-Tag is a game where one person chases others, attempting to touch them to pass on the "it" status.
- Swimming-Swimming dates back to prehistoric times, over 10,000 years ago. Swimming has been part of the modern Olympic Games since 1896 for men and 1912 for women. Swimming uses almost every major muscle group, making it a great way to build strength, flexibility, and endurance.
- RV-A recreational vehicle is a motor vehicle or trailer that includes a living space. It typically includes sleeping areas, a small kitchen, a bathroom, and a living space making it ideal for camping and road trips. RV's come in an array of sizes and offer different levels of comfort and amenities.
- Squirrel-Squirrels are members of the rodent family and include tree squirrels, ground squirrels, and flying squirrels. They are indigenous to the Americas, Eurasia, and Africa and were introduced by humans to Australia. Squirrels are primarily herbivorous and eat shoots, buds, berries, tree bark and large quantities of seeds and nuts.



Mural Features

- Elm Tree- An elm tree is a tall, deciduous tree known for its arching branches and serrated, oval-shaped leaves. It provides ample shade and is commonly found lining streets, parks, and forests. With its strong wood and distinctive shape, the elm is both a resilient and iconic tree in many landscapes.
- Pine Tree-Pine trees are evergreen conifers found worldwide, though they are native to northern temperate regions. They are among the oldest trees on Earth, with some living up to 6,000 years. With 90 species, pines are most found in mountainous areas.
- Peddle Boat-A pedal boat or paddle boat is a human-powered watercraft propelled by the action of pedals turning a paddle wheel. Typically, a two-seat pedal boat has two sets of pedals side-by-side, designed to be used together.
- Kayak-a kayak is a light, narrow boat that has both ends tapered to a point and is propelled by a double-bladed paddle. The top of a kayak is often closed except for an opening in which the paddler sits with legs extended straight out front.
- Inflatable Boat- An inflatable boat is a lightweight, portable watercraft made of flexible, air-filled tubes that provide buoyancy. It is commonly used for recreation, rescue operations, and military applications due to its stability and lightweight nature. These boats can be powered by paddles, small motors, or sails, making them versatile for various water conditions.
- Deer- A deer is an herbivorous mammal known for its slender legs, large eyes, and impressive antlers, in males of most species. There are 43 species of deer and are notable for having 2 large and 2 small hooves on each foot. Deer live mainly in forests but may be found in deserts, tundra, and swamps and on high mountainside. They are native to Europe, Asia, North America, South America, and northern Africa.
- Crocodile-A crocodile is a semi-aquatic reptile with an armored body, a long snout, and sharp teeth designed for catching prey. It is typically found in wetland habitats like freshwater marshes, swamps, and mangrove swamps. Crocodiles can tolerate saltwater and feed on insects, crustaceans, fish, birds, and other mammals. They are known for their strong bite and hunting skills.
- Trotline- A trotline, fishing line is a long fishing line with multiple baited hooks attached at intervals, used to catch fish in rivers, lakes, or coastal waters. It is typically anchored at both ends and can be set in place for an extended period, allowing fish to take the bait without monitoring. Trotlines are commonly used by commercial and recreational fishermen to catch catfish and other bottom-dwelling species.
- Duck-A duck is a water bird with a wide, flat bill, webbed feet, and waterproof feathers. Because of their webbed feet, ducks are excellent swimmers. They can fly short distances and are known for their distinctive quacking sounds. Most ducks eat a mix of plants, insects, and small aquatic creatures.
- Turtle-Turtles are classified as cold-blooded reptiles with bodies encased in a bony shell; this group also includes tortoises. There are approximately 360 species of turtles found across the globe, on every continent except Antarctica, inhabiting environments ranging from oceans and rivers to forests and deserts. All turtles must breathe air through lungs and cannot survive entirely underwater. They also lay their eggs on land, typically digging nests in sand or soil for incubation.

Mural Features

- Armadillo-An armadillo is a small, nocturnal mammal known for its protective shell made of tough, bony plates. It uses this armor to defend itself from predators and may dig quickly to escape danger. Armadillos have strong claws for digging burrows and foraging for food. They primarily eat insects, grubs, and other invertebrates, but they also consume plants, small reptiles, and eggs.

Themes to Explore

- Habitats
- Animal Identification and Behavior
- Plants
- Water and Land
- Conservation
- Water and Soil Exploration
- Sink or Float

Mounted Animals and Artifacts

- Raccoon-Raccoons live throughout the continental U.S. in woods, wetlands, suburbs, parks, cities, and anywhere there is cover, food, and water. Raccoons are omnivores, eating both meat and vegetables. They are nocturnal and most often search for food at night, eating grasshoppers, nuts, berries, mice, squirrels, and bird eggs. Raccoons are solitary animals, except for the breeding season. Females usually have one litter a year, with three to seven offspring per litter.
- Cattails- A cattail is a tall, reed-like wetland plant with long, slender leaves and a distinctive brown, sausage-shaped flower spike. Found near ponds, marshes, and lakes, it provides habitat for wildlife and helps filter water. In late summer, the flower head releases fluffy seeds that disperse in the wind.
- Flat-bottomed Boat-A flat-bottomed boat is a boat with a level base. This design allows the boat to float in very shallow water, making it ideal for rivers, swamps, and calm lakes. These low-speed boats are commonly used for fishing, hunting, or transport in shallow water.

List of Hansa Animals

- Raccoon, Great Blue Heron, Pelican, Mallard Duck

To Find Out More

- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- USGS: Lakes and Reservoirs