



Weeping Desert Lab

This project is dedicated to the Northern Paiute, the native custodians of the land on which Fly Ranch sits. We offer this proposal in their honor, and we thank them for their hospitality and inspiration.

The traditional willow-framed houses of the Northern Paiute inspire the structure of this project. The Paiutes built no permanent structures, and instead crafted temporary shelters using willow branches and mats of cattail, bending and lashing these natural materials into form. The simplicity, sustainability, and scalability of this practice by the traditional inhabitants of this land are the starting points of our proposal.

Weeping Desert Lab is a sheltered space to celebrate the landscape and harbor an edible plant laboratory. It combines three functions: geothermal greenhouse, solar still, and contemplative space. The system is entirely passive - relying only on sunlight and the evaporation of water. It "weeps" potable water and bears edible harvests, allowing visitors to viscerally experience the power of the hot springs, sunlight, and soil while tasting the products of these carefully woven elements. The greenhouse is both a reprieve from the landscape and an enhancement of its constituent elements.

< archival photo source: Survival Arts of the Primitive Paiutes by Margaret M. Wheat