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Structure: Water to People

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STRUCTURE

*The Kansas prairies are as mysterious and moody as
the sea in their loveliness, yet we graze them and plow
them and mark them with roads and do not see them.*

— William Allen White

OPPOSITE PAGE

Things Will Attach Themselves (detail)

Clare Doveton

WATER TO PEOPLE

In little more than a century, we have nearly destroyed an ecosystem that remained relatively unchanged for millennia. In the industrial age, people no longer had to go to the water — it came to them. Suddenly, every place was habitable — from barren desert to sprawling city. Creeks, rivers, and sacred springs be dammed! Rural prairielands would be consumed by reservoirs engineered to tame record floods and quench post-war thirsts. Through pipes and channels, we bent water to our will. But there was a price to pay. What was once a boundless Sea of Grass became fragments put asunder by roads, water-plundering trees, and a network of pipe to feed a society with an addict's appetite for water. Tilled soil filled the reservoirs, and invasive plants robbed the soil. In a landscape born of fire and water, this was tempting fate. We must reverse course before it is too late.



Natives
Shreepad Joglekar