



Pierce County *Parks*

05/06/2026

# Foothills Trail Extension: South Prairie to Wilkeson Routing Study

Travis Curry

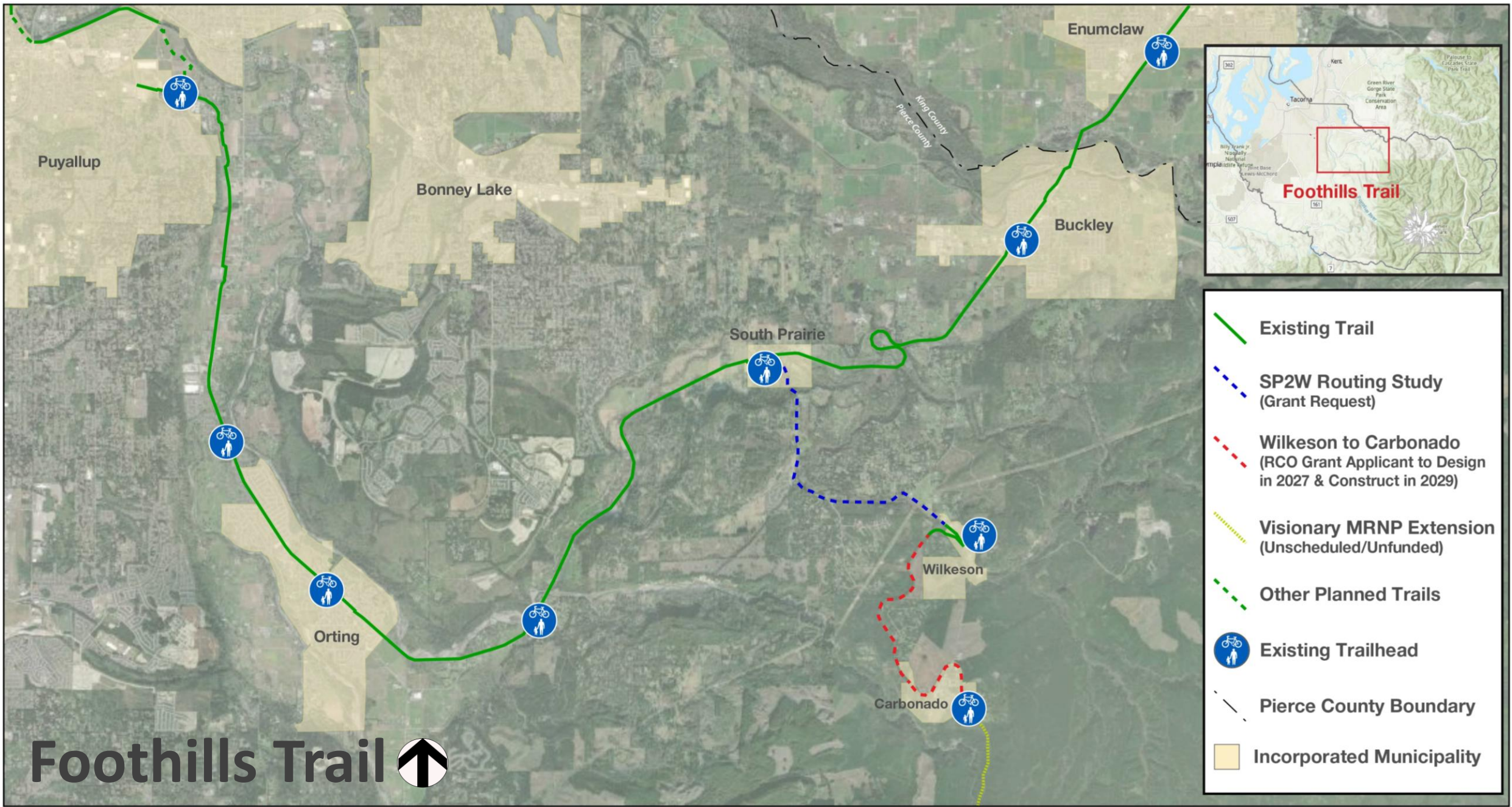
Regional Trails Planner



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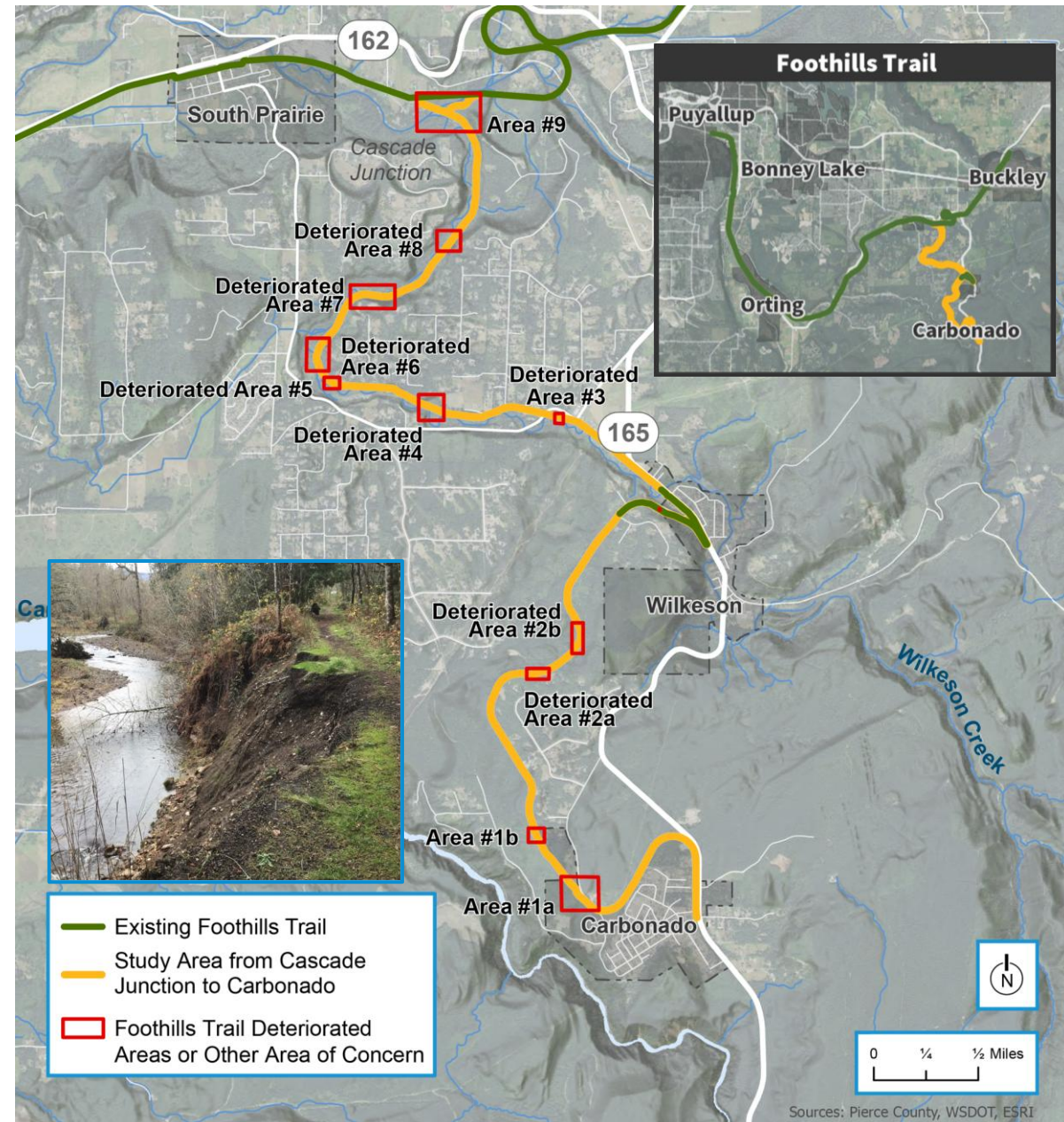
(253) 888-6619





# 2025 Feasibility Study

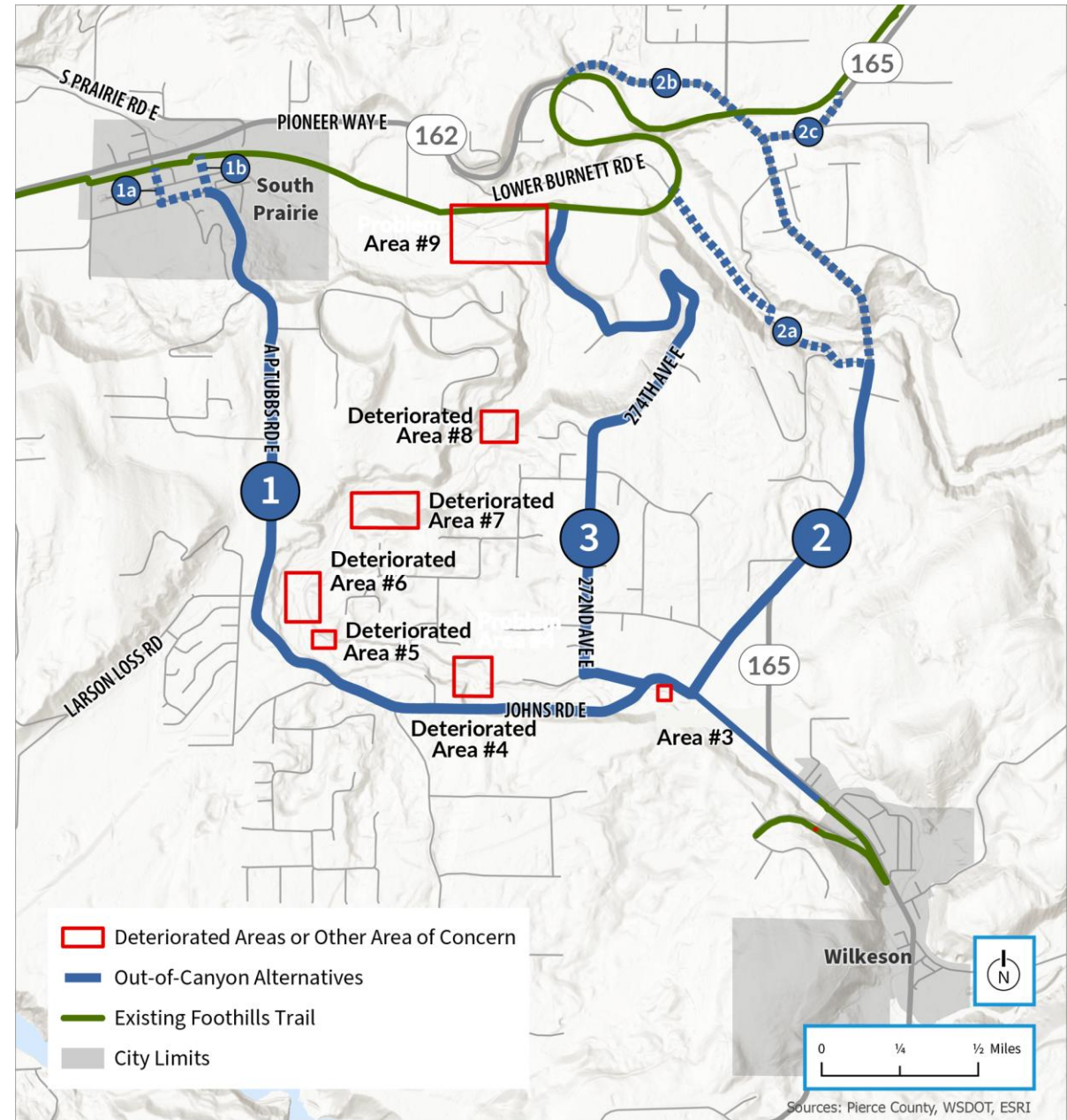
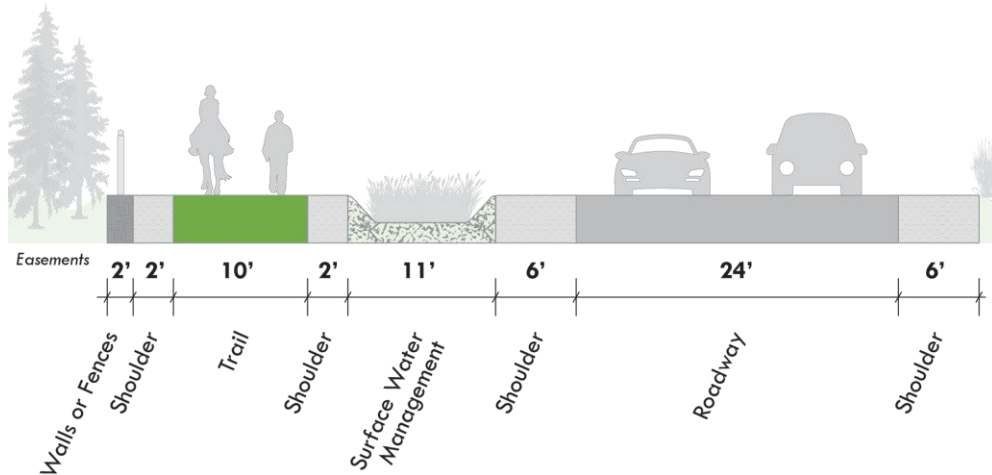
- Assess existing conditions along the former rail corridor between Cascade Junction & Carbonado.
- Determine whether trail improvements could provide a viable, permanent shared-use path along the former railbed.
- Widespread deterioration, including complete erosion & disappearance of the railbed, was observed in Wilkeson Creek Canyon (Deteriorated Areas 3-8).





# Out-of-Canyon Routes

- WA DFW, Tribal partners, & other interested parties encouraged exploring alternatives outside of Wilkeson Creek Canyon.
- Planning team identified three routes along existing transportation routes.
- Additional engagement & analysis is required to determine a preferred route before design & construction.





# Routing Study

**Select a preferred alignment to extend the Foothills Trail from South Prairie to the existing paved path in Wilkeson & the future trail between Wilkeson & Carbonado.**

- **Review & update previously identified alignments to define existing conditions:**
  - Critical areas, utilities, ROW availability, crossings, sight distances, cultural resources, community impact
- **Develop conceptual design & planning-level cost estimates for three trail alignments.**
- **Identify high-cost structural elements:**
  - Water crossings, bridge alterations, culvert evaluation, etc.
- **Identify potential conflict points with motor vehicles & conceptual treatments to mitigate.**
- **Engage with interested parties & residents to inform analysis & evaluation.**
- **Develop report & technical memorandum to prepare for design.**

# Safety & Accessibility

**Completion of an active transportation connection between Wilkeson & the existing Foothills Trail at South Prairie:**

- **Expands options in an area with no public transportation services, supporting people of all ages, abilities, & income levels.**
- **Removes vulnerable users from the roadway, enhancing safety for both drivers & active mode users.**
- **Aligns with Pierce County's Vision Zero Action Plan (2025).**



# Local Agency Support

- Facilitate efficient connection between the rural centers.
- Encourage recreational tourism by connecting the Foothills Trail to communities that have been negatively impacted by the Fairfax Bridge (SR-165) closure.
- South Prairie’s Comprehensive Plan prioritizes coordination with Pierce County & other interested parties to advance development of the Foothills Trail regionally & in South Prairie.
- Wilkeson’s Comprehensive Plan states that “the Foothills Trail should be extended through Wilkeson to enhance opportunities for pedestrians & bicycles.”



# Community Support

- **Public Engagement (Summer 2025):**
  - Online Survey with Foothills Trail Coalition
  - 425 responses; 150 from South Prairie, Wilkeson, Carbonado, & Surrounding Communities
  - Over 60% of respondents expressed explicit support, less than 3% opposed
  - South Prairie to Wilkeson identified as essential connection
- **11 Letters of Support:**
  - Mayors of South Prairie, Wilkeson, Carbonado, & Buckley
  - White River School District
  - Local Community Organizations
  - Active Transportation Advocates



# Questions & Discussion

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