

Regional Open Space Conservation Plan Update

Advisory Committee

July 27, 2026



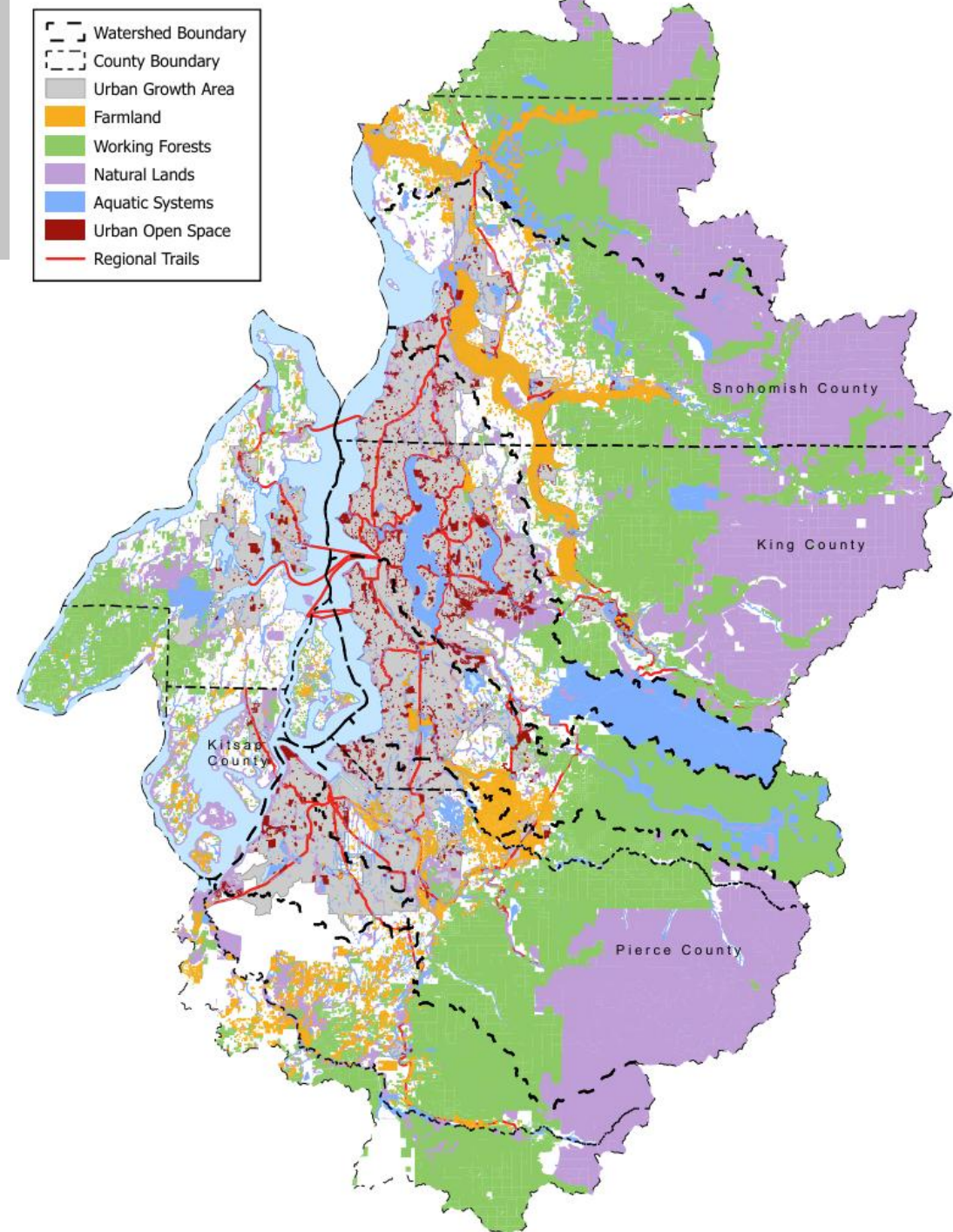
Puget Sound Regional Council

Regional Open Space Network

6 categories of open space:

- Farmland
- Working forests
- Aquatic systems
- Natural lands
- Urban open space
- Regional trails

[Regional Open Space Conservation Plan](#)

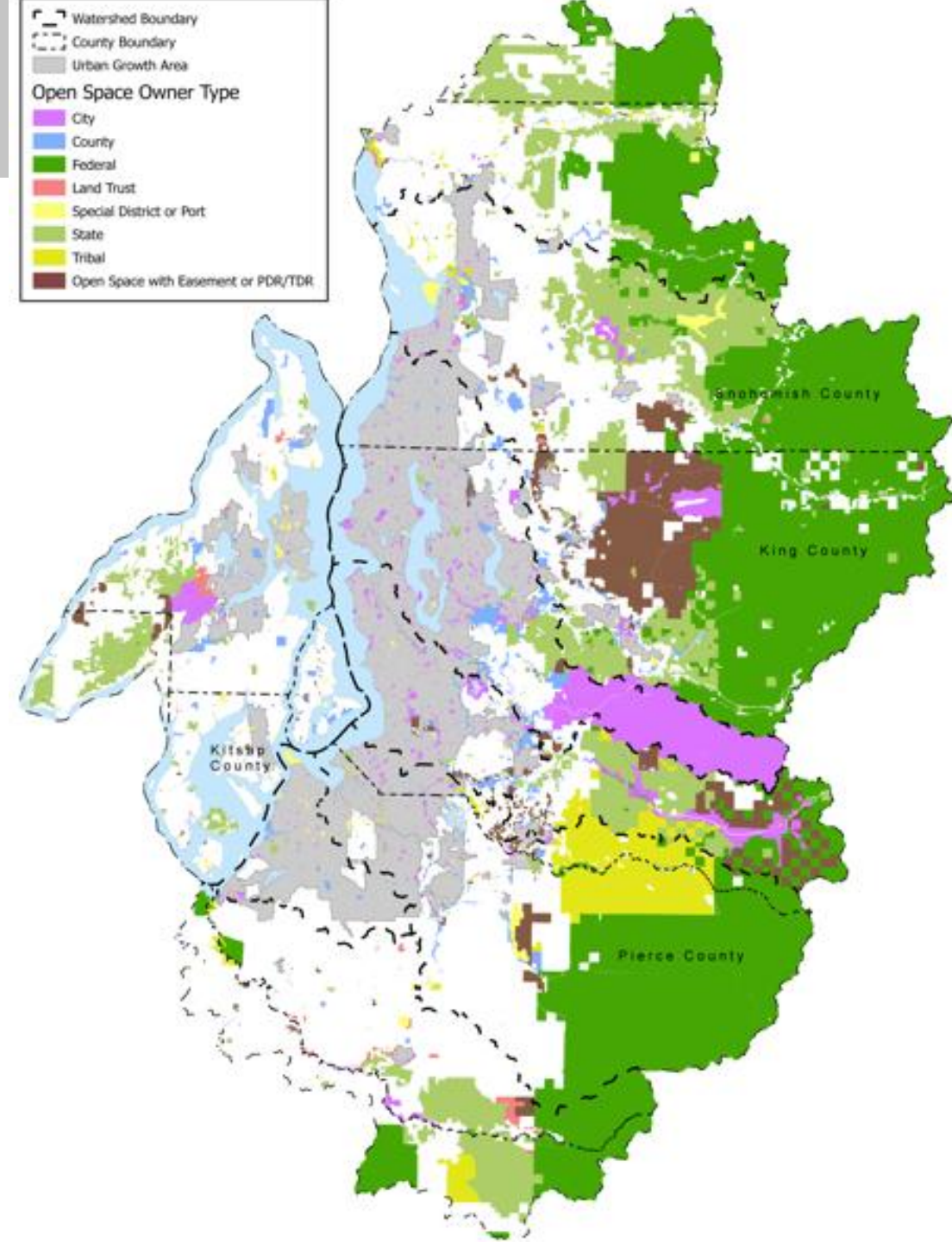


Protected Lands

Short term conservation goal
in the plan (2018–2025):
80,000 acres

Increase in acres mapped as
conserved since 2018: 79,000

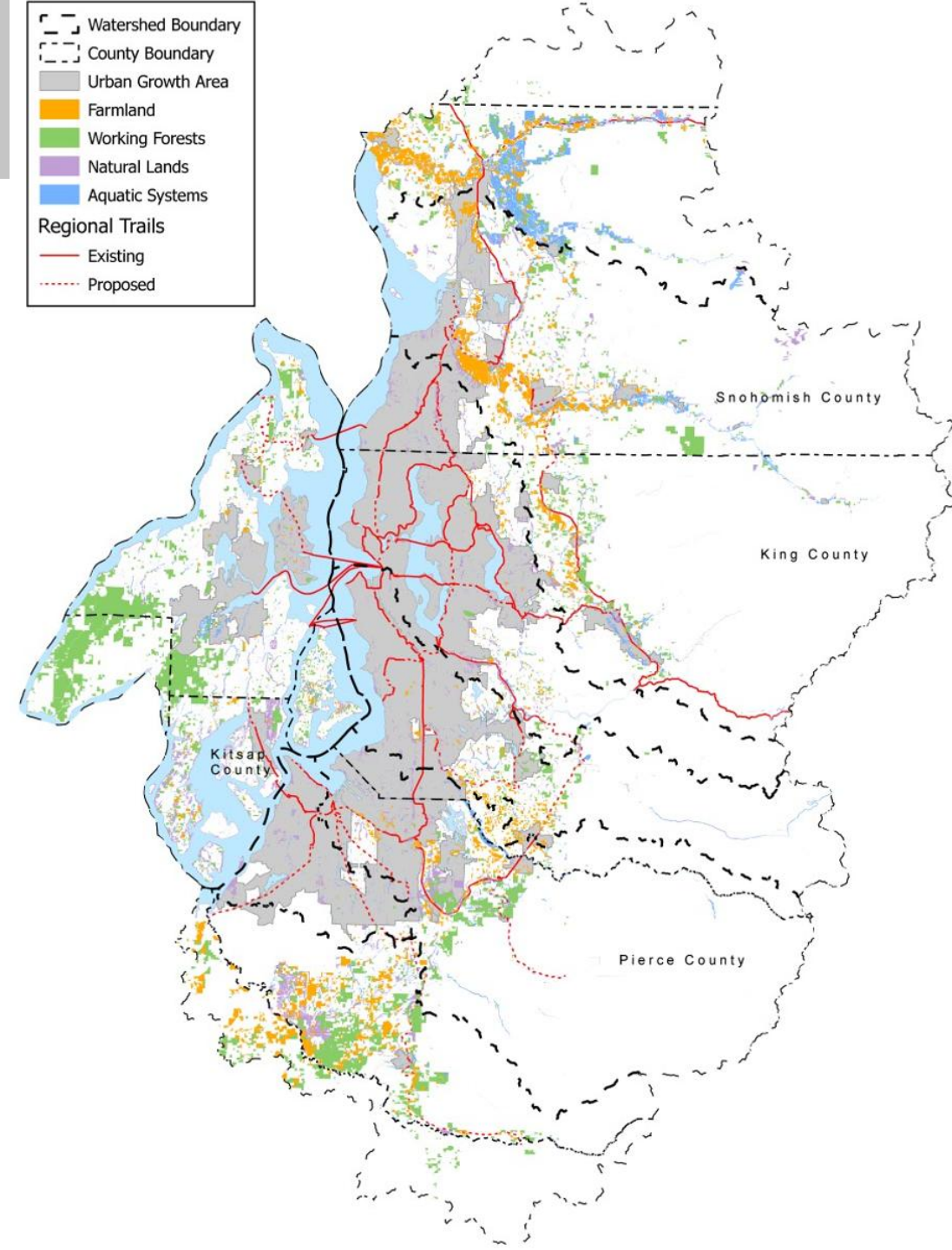
- Includes new data sources



Conservation Needs

Conservation needs in the regional open space network:

- Farmland: 104,000 acres (2018)
- Working Forests: 177,650 acres
- Aquatic Systems: 83,040 acres
- Natural Lands: 71,520 acres
- Regional Trails: 300 miles (2018)

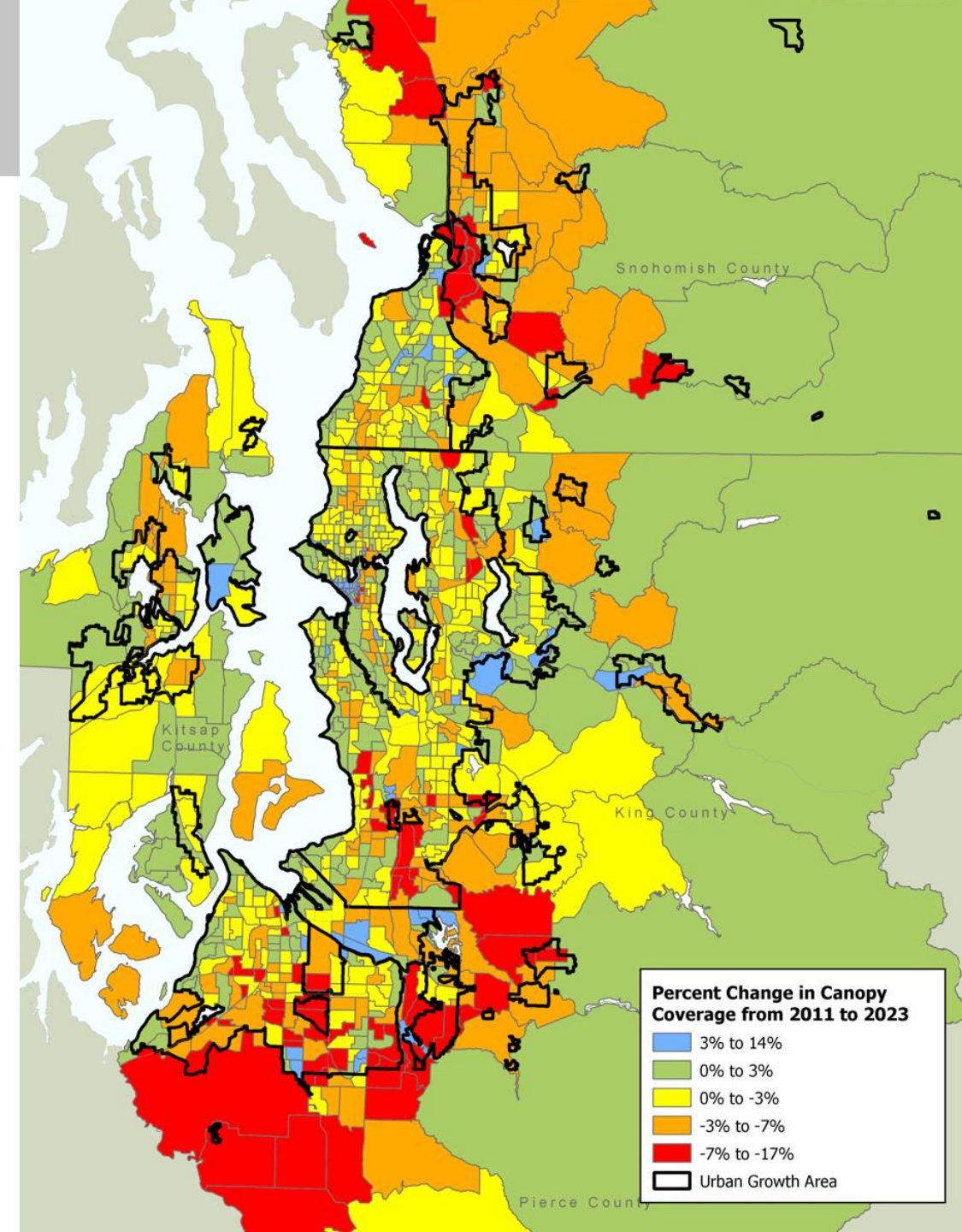


Tree Canopy Cover

Goal: By 2050, tree canopy cover in region remains at 2018 levels. By 2050, it will increase in the regional open space network.

Tree canopy cover change 2011–2023:

- Region: decrease of 1%
- Urban: decrease of 2%
- Regional open space network: decrease of 1%



Urban Growth

2012–2024 housing development in urban growth areas:

- Region: 95%
- King: 99%
- Kitsap: 76%
- Pierce: 88%
- Snohomish: 92%

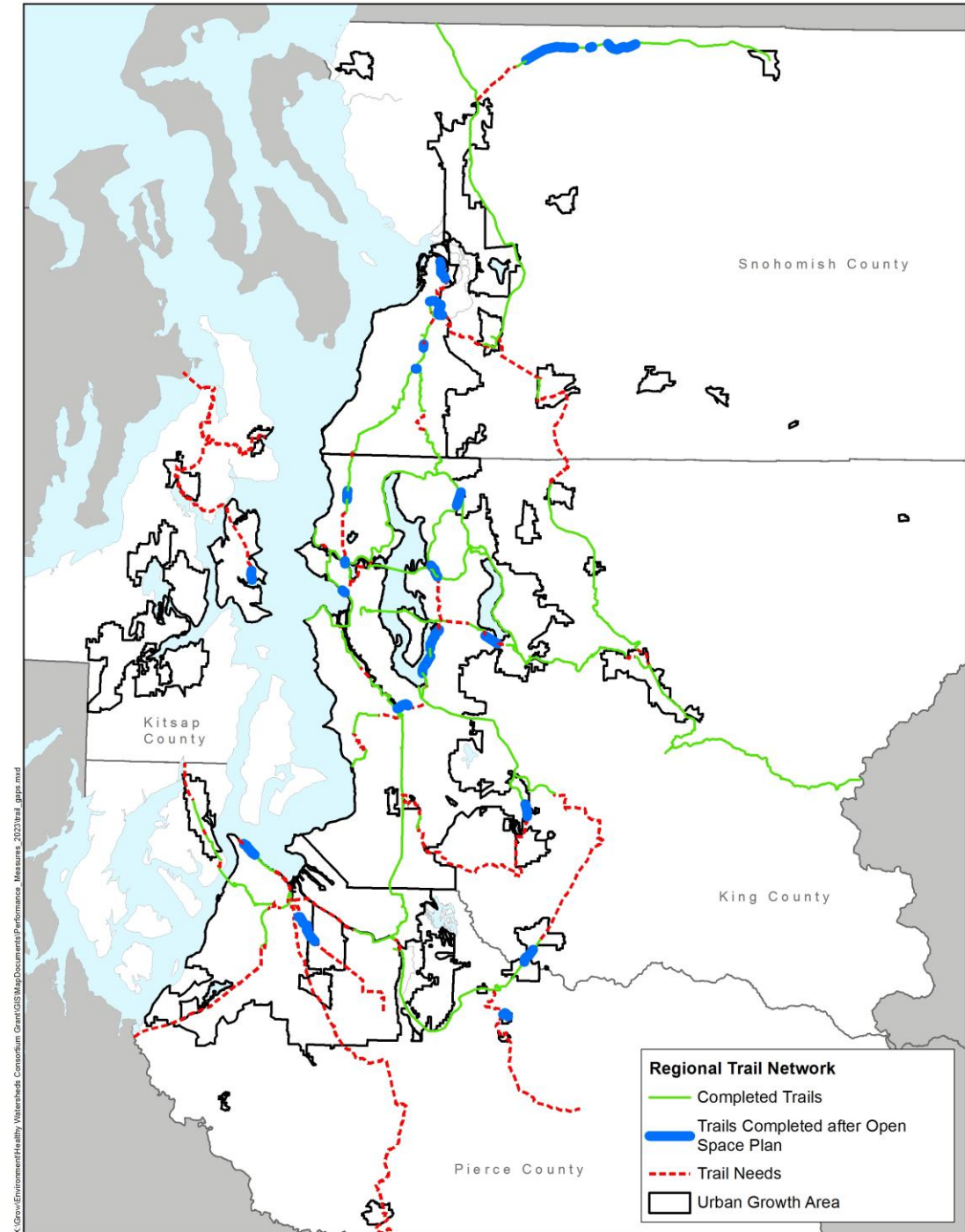


Regional Trails

Goal: By 2050, add 300 miles to the regional trail network

Since 2018, 30 miles added to the regional trail network. Examples:

- Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail in King County
- Sound to Olympics Trail in Kitsap County
- Pipeline Trail in Pierce County
- White Horse Trail in Snohomish County



Farmland Designations

Designated acres of farmland within ROSN study area

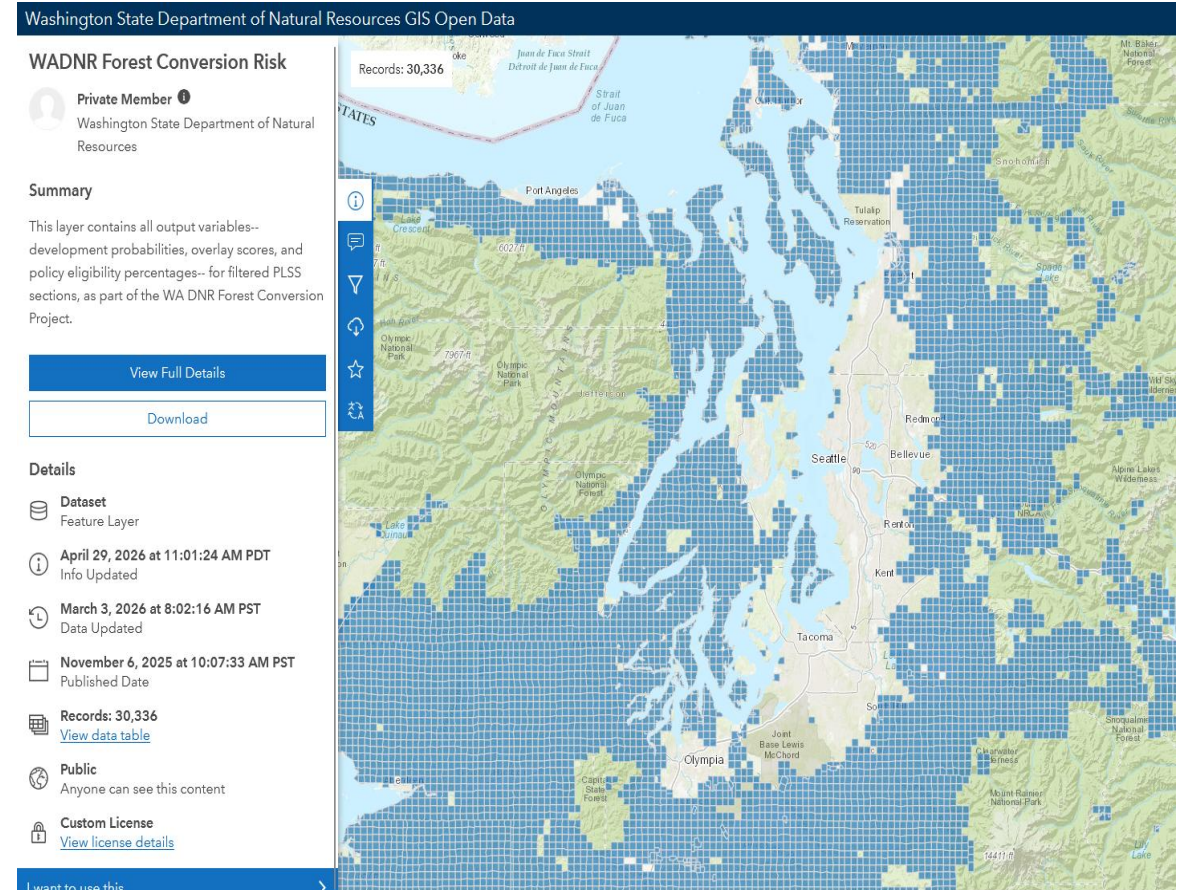
County	2018	2026	Change
King	41,149	39,662	-1,487
Pierce	31,785	31,427	-359
Snohomish	60,310	59,930	-381
Thurston	4,992	4,430	-562
Mason	254	254	0
Total	138,490	135,702	-2,788



WA DNR Forest Conversion Project

Potential categories for risk assessment

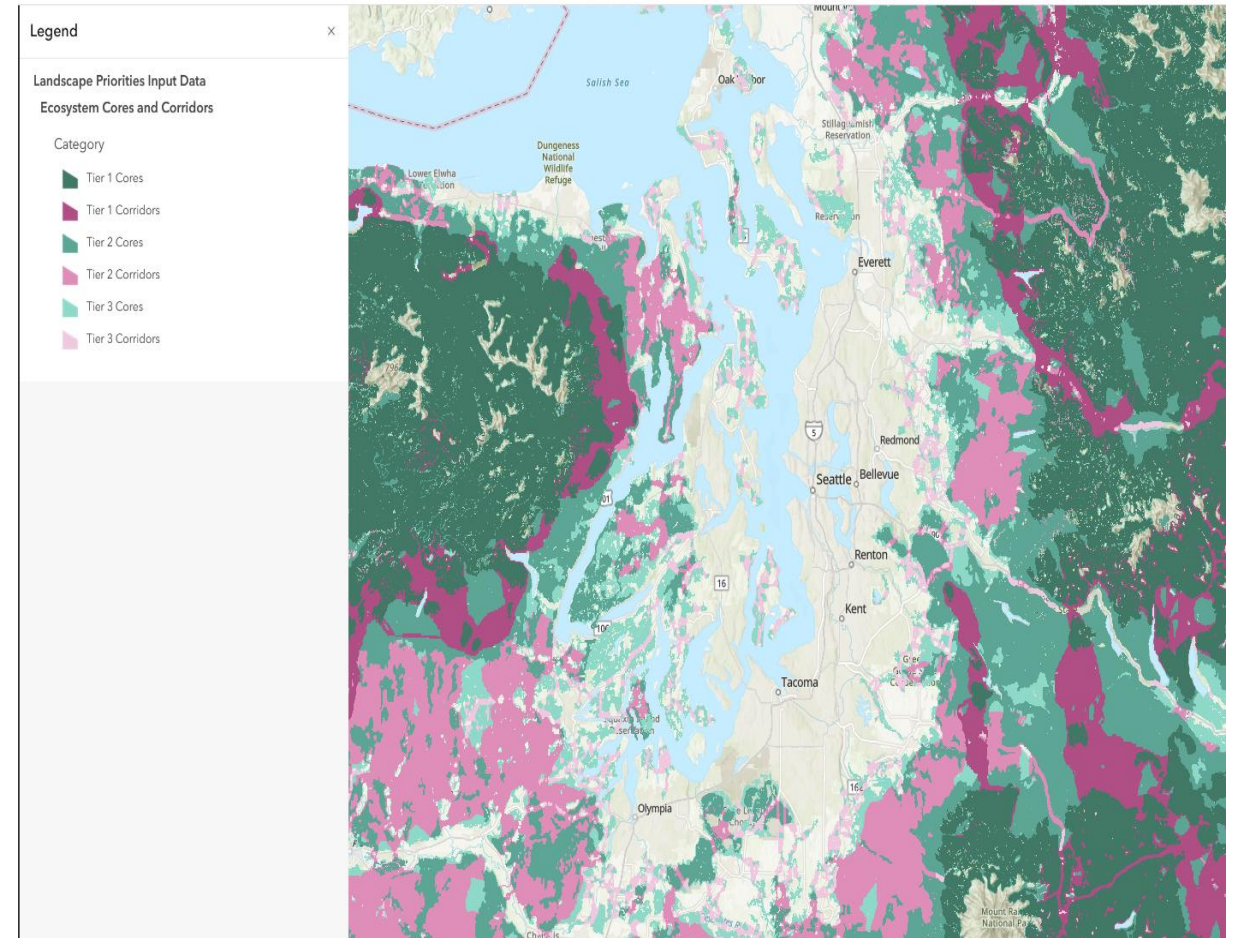
- Carbon storage
- Outdoor recreation importance
- Water supply
- Commercial timber supply
- Salmon bearing streams
- Water quality
- Important animal habitats
- Vulnerability of forested areas to non-forest type change due to climate change



Ecosystem Cores and Corridors

- Developed by WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- Produced as part of WA Habitat Connectivity Action Plan
- Tiered approach for measuring ecosystem tolerance for suboptimal conditions/human-modified landscapes

Washington Habitat Connectivity Action Plan Spatial Data



Discussion Questions



- Do you have any questions about or suggestions for the maps or data?
- For the forest conversion risk information, do any of the categories stand out as important areas to focus on for additional data analysis?
- Would it be valuable to overlay the ecosystem cores and corridors on the conservation needs map?
- Do you have any recommendations on showing areas of open space category overlap with conservation needs?

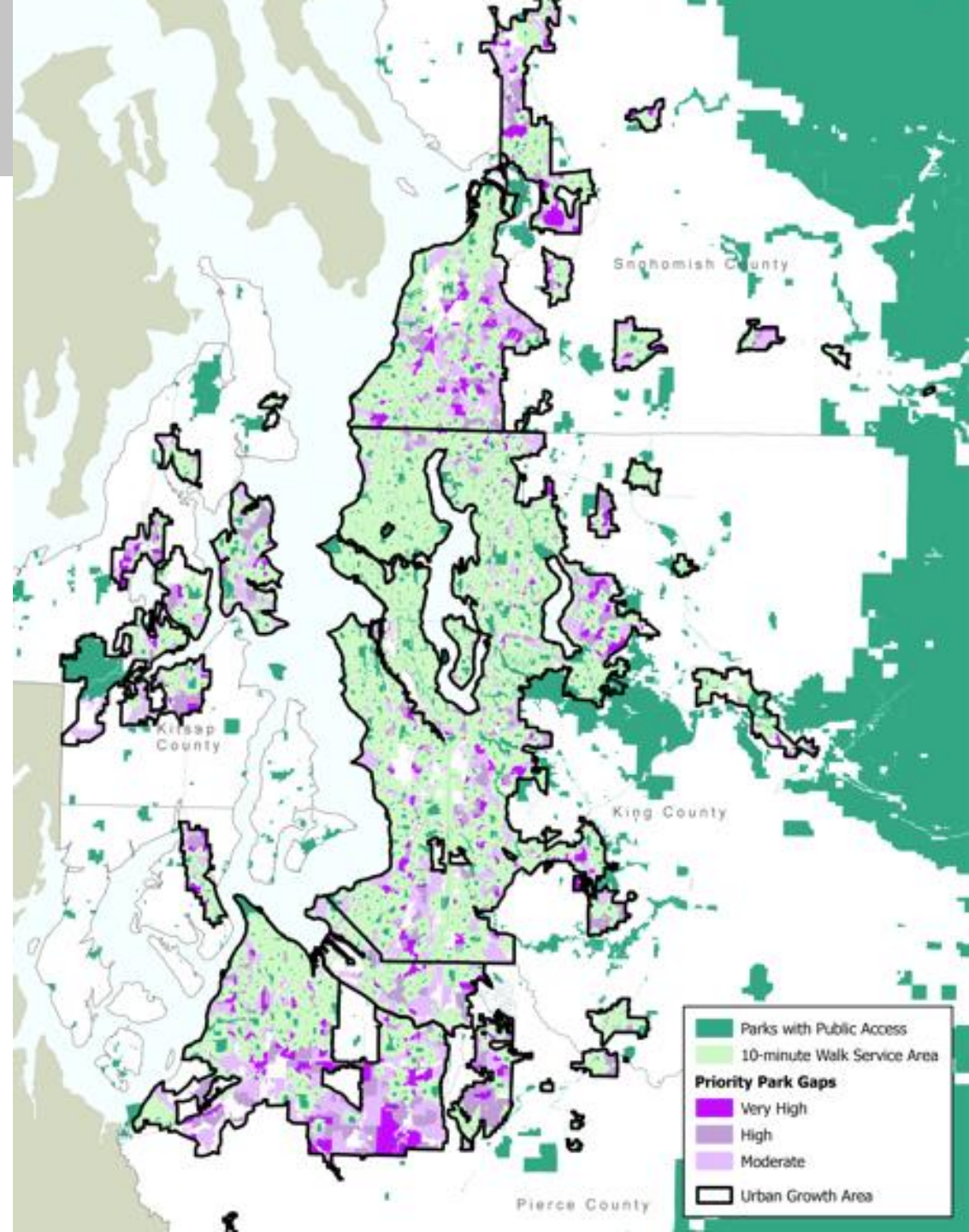


Parks & Urban Open Space

Goal: By 2050, all urban residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park.

ParkServe: urban population within a 10-minute walk of a park: 72% (2026)

- 63% of regional growth centers have a park gap
- 50% of high-capacity transit station areas have a park gap



Access to Open Space (Chapter 5)

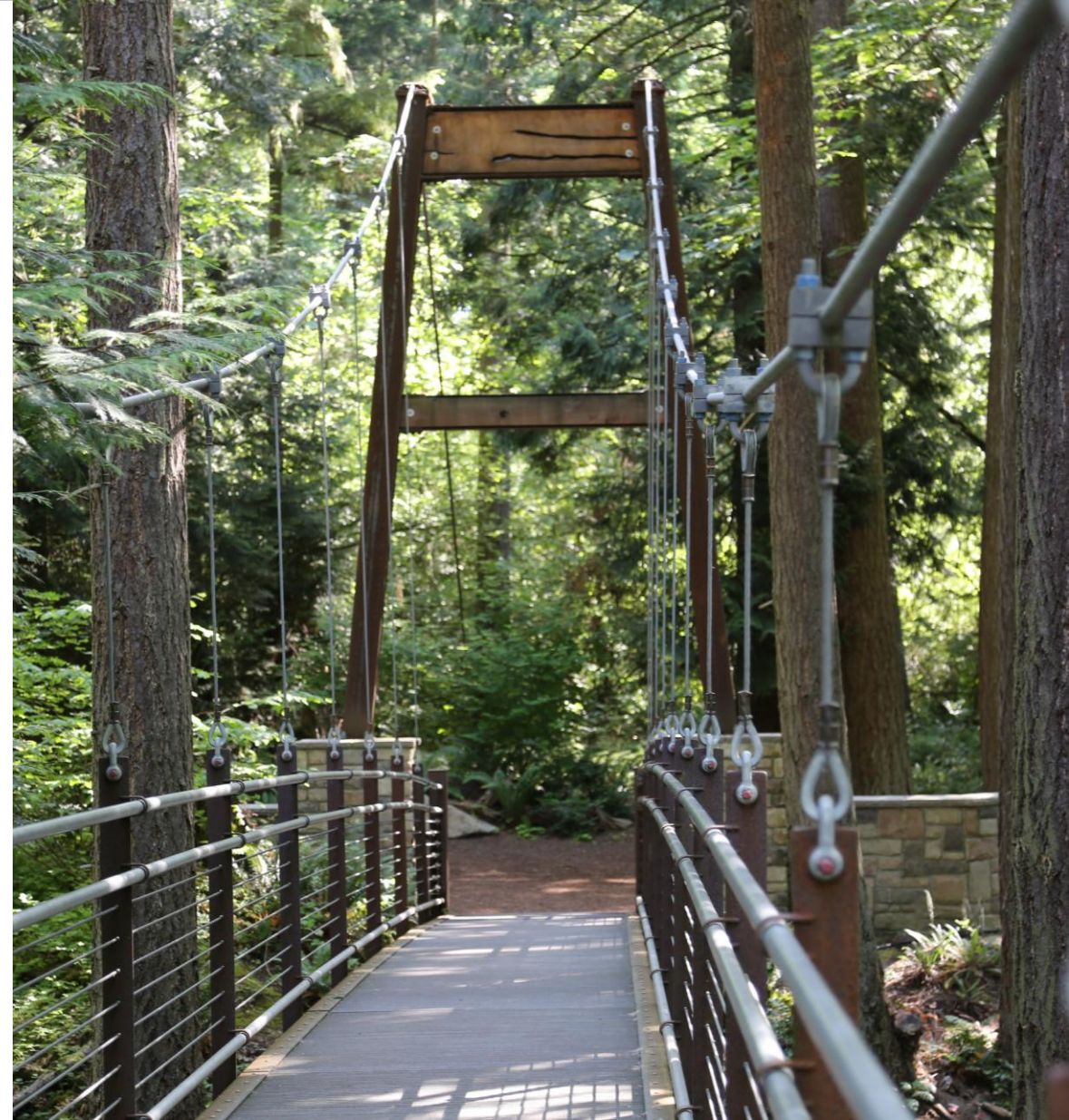
Changes in this update:

- ~~Measuring Access to Urban Open Space~~ – **Discuss ParkServe methodology and analysis**
- Identifying urban open space access gap areas
- Urban open space needs
- **Green space and displacement**
- **Tree canopy and urban heat islands**
- Access to wild open space
- **Access to regional trails**



New Topics and Research Approaches

- Green Space and Displacement
 - TPL's 2024 Report:
Great Parks Should Not Uproot Communities: Green Gentrification Risk Factors and Anti-Displacement Options
- Tree canopy and urban heat islands
 - Tree canopy
 - PSRC's Equity Tracker
- Access to regional trails – who has access to multi-use paths
 - Research on county websites



Discussion Questions



- Do you have any questions about or suggestions for the park access information?
- What recent examples or resources related to these topics should be included?



Conservation Action Plan (Chapter 6)

Changes in this update:

- 10 ~~11~~ key conservation strategies
 - Tools
 - Actions
 - Case studies
 - ~~Potential Measures of Success~~
Performance measures



Key Conservation Strategies

1. Incorporate open space conservation and enhancement into all levels of planning

Tools

- VISION 2060
- County/city comprehensive plans
- Watershed planning
- Development regulations
- Parks planning

Performance measures:



Key Conservation Strategies

2. Support growth in the right places

Tools

- Urban Growth Area, Regional Growth Strategy, local zoning and development codes

Performance measures

- Stable UGA boundary
- Increasing share of new development occurring within UGA
- Acres of impervious surface gain per new housing unit (Puget Sound Partnership)
- Increasing percentage of new housing is multi-unit



Key Conservation Strategies

3. Keep working lands working

Tools

- Transfer of development rights, working lands designations, and economic development

Performance measures

- Working lands designations are maintained, and enlarged where feasible
- No net loss of acres in active production
- By 2050: 104,000 additional acres of farmland are under long term protection
- By 2050: ~~183,000~~ 177,700 additional acres of working forests are under long term protection



Key Conservation Strategies

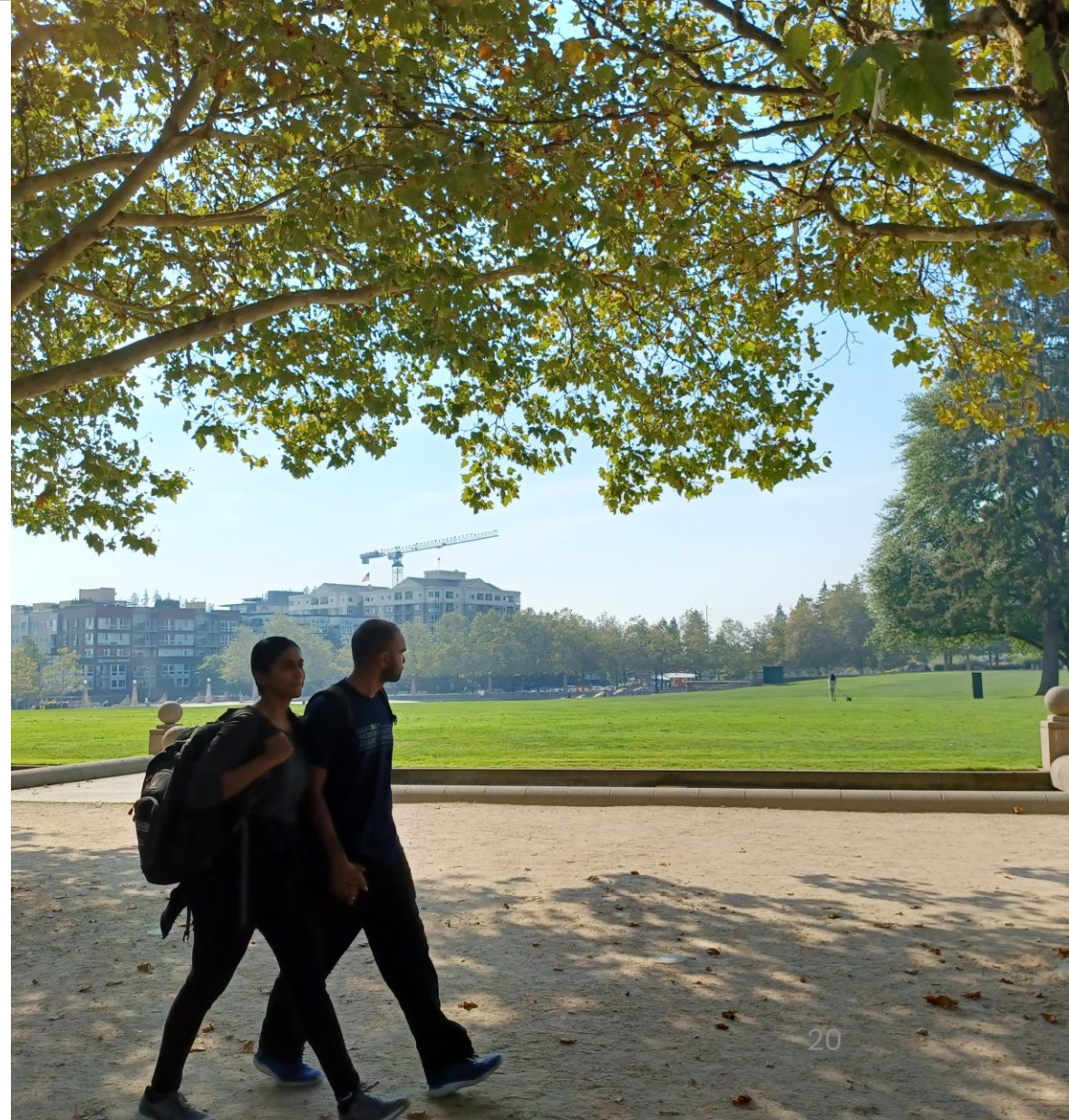
4. Support parks and open space and increase access to open space for urban residents

Tools

- Acquisition, renovating existing open space, stacking benefits, partnerships with school districts, and more

Performance measures

- By 2050, all urban residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park
- Expanded trailhead shuttle options available throughout the region



Key Conservation Strategies

5. Build a regional trail network

Tools

- Regional Active Transportation Plan, PSRC transportation funding, equity mapping

Performance measures

- By 2050, add ~~300~~ 270 miles to the regional trail network
- Maintain equitable access to regional trail network (no difference in regional trails inside and outside of equity focus areas)



Key Conservation Strategies

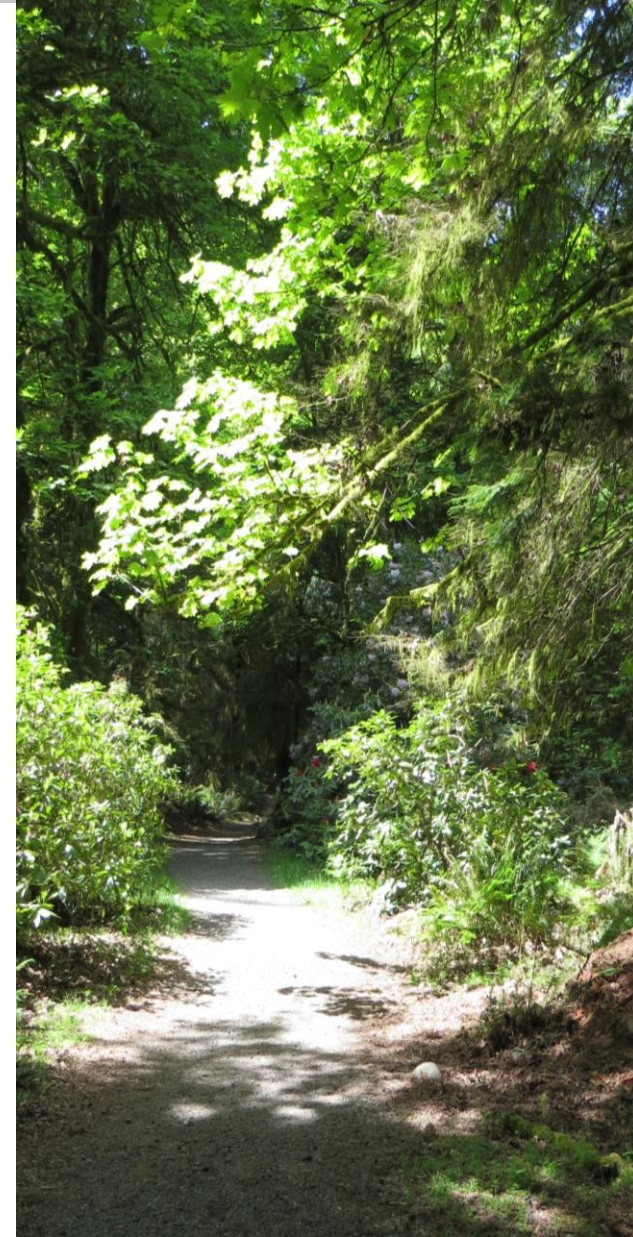
6. Enhance stewardship on open space lands

Tools

- Conservation districts, public benefit ratings systems, forest/farm management plans, and ecosystem service markets

Performance measures

- Counties have implemented robust Public Benefit Ratings Systems
- An increasing number of rural landowners in each county are enrolled in or participating in an educational or stewardship program
- Carbon, water, or other ecological credits from open spaces in the region are sold



Key Conservation Strategies

7. Protect remaining key habitat areas

Tools

- Conservation easement and fee acquisition

Performance measures

- By 2050, ~~93,000~~ 83,000 additional acres of aquatic system lands are under long term protection
- By 2050, ~~82,000~~ 71,500 additional acres of natural lands are under long term protection



Key Conservation Strategies

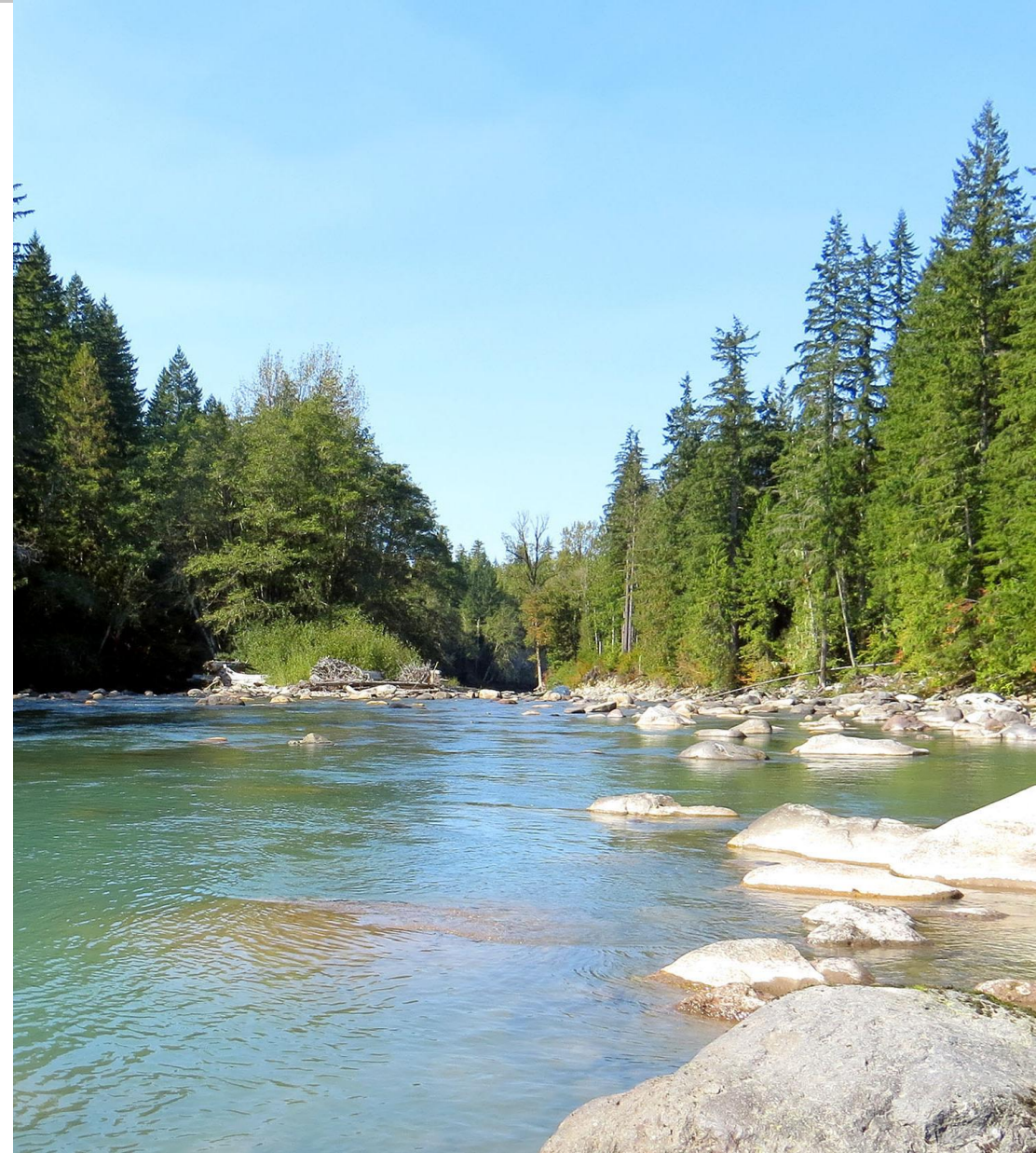
8. Restore habitat in high value areas

Tools

- Watershed planning and restoration actions such as reconnecting floodplain habitat and softening marine shoreline armoring

Performance measures

- New acres of estuarine habitat restored
- New acres of floodplain and side-channel habitat is reconnected
- New acres of riparian area are restored



Key Conservation Strategies

9. Coordinate planning among and within agencies, jurisdictions, Tribes, and organizations

Tools

- Watershed planning, coordinating funding across jurisdictions, countywide hazard mitigation plans

Performance measures

- Increased number of plans that incorporate multiple types of open space and plan for multiple benefits
- Implementation of a coordinated funding pilot program



Key Conservation Strategies

10. Build multi-benefit green infrastructure

Tools

- Regional Coordination, tie-in with parks, public rights-of-way

Performance measures

- Site planning and infrastructure planning incorporate more green and recreational elements and other potential benefits
- Water quality and runoff flow in urban streams improves
- Salmon pre-spawn mortality in urban streams decreases



Key Conservation Strategies

11. (NEW!) Enhance tree canopy cover

Tools

- Local tree ordinances, climate resilient practices, long term management plans, rural development standards

Performance measures

- By 2050, tree canopy in the region remains at 2018 levels
- By 2050, tree canopy cover in the regional open space network has *increased*

Case Study Ideas?



Discussion Questions



- Are these the right strategies?
- Do you have any suggestions for tools, actions, performance measures, or case studies for the strategies?



Engagement



Summer activities:

- Community survey
- I ❤️ Open Spaces
Photo Challenge
 - First prize:
Washington State
Discover Pass
 - Chance to get
your open space
photos in the plan
- Community events



Engagement

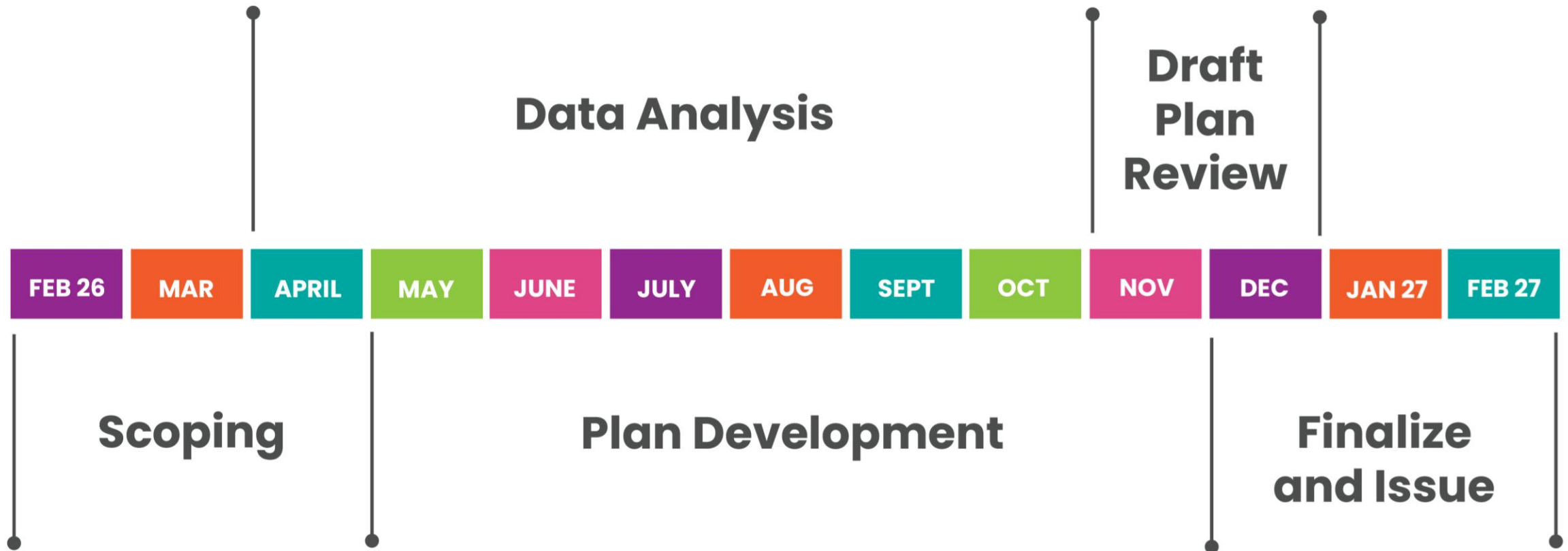


Community Events:

- July 9: Tacoma Farmers Market
- July 10: Aquafest, Lake Stevens
- July 14: National Parks & Rec. Month Celebration, Puyallup
- July 16: Music in the Meadows, Kent
- July 22: Marysville Farmers Market
- August 7: Bremerton First Friday
- August 11: Silverdale Farmers Market
- September 2: Columbia City Farmers Market



Open Space Plan Update Schedule



Thank You!

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