



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Foothills Trail (WA)

Washington



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The Foothills Trail is a 30-mile collection of five unconnected segments of the old Burlington Northern Railway that served the farming, coal-mining, and logging economies near the base of Mount Rainier.

The longest section is a paved trail that rolls for 23 miles between the outskirts of Puyallup to Buckley. Other paved, gravel, and dirt segments are located in Boise, Enumclaw, and Wilkeson. Plans call for connecting all these pieces.

The Northern Pacific Railway Company laid its tracks

from Tacoma to the coalfields around Wilkeson in 1877. In 1970, the railroad merged into Burlington Northern, which ceased using the lines in 1982. Two years later, residents began working to create the Foothills Trail.

Puyallup to Buckley

The most popular trail is the Puyallup-Buckley piece. There are five trailheads—East Puyallup, McMillin, Orting, South Prairie, and Buckley—along the 23-mile route, in addition to several other parking locations.

Here, you'll pass through farmland that once produced 60 million daffodil bulbs annually. All that remains of that era is the annual Daffodil Festival, as well as that bloom's depictions on signs and even a sculpture along the route.

From Puyallup, the trail heads south as it follows WA-162 and parallels the Puyallup River. In McMillin, the route crosses the river via a pedestrian bridge. About eight miles south of Puyallup, the City of Orting offers a bike shop, cafés, bakeries, and more.

South of Orting, the trail curves northeast as it begins to follow the Carbon River more closely. Briefly veering away from the trail crosses the Carbon River that runs milky white from a melting glacier on Mount Rainier. The active volcano's white summit is visible most of the way. It's responsible for making this perhaps the only rail-trail posted with lahar warning signs, which direct trail users to head for the hills to escape volcanic mudflow in the event of seismic activity.

A picnic shelter set up by a local roadside coffee stand welcomes trail users to the trailhead in South Prairie. From here, the trail continues east through Cascade Junction (unmarked, an old railroad landmark), where a branch may one day extend to connect the isolated pieces to the south that run to Wilkeson and Carbonado.

The route follows the old railroad S-curve (less than 1.5 miles



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States: Washington

Counties: King, Pierce

Length: 31.3 miles

Trail end points: Pioneer Way E & Shaw Rd E (Puyallup) to SE 416th St, west of Veazie-Cumberland Rd SE (Enumclaw)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Dirt, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Fishing, Wheelchair

Accessible, Horseback Riding, Walking

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the East Puyallup trailhead, from the intersection of State Route 167 and SR 410 in Sumner, follow SR 410 east for 1.3 miles. Take the SR 162/Valley Avenue exit toward Orting, and follow SR 162 for 0.5 mile south. Turn right onto 80th Street E. The East Puyallup trailhead is about 1 mile ahead on the right.

To reach the South Prairie trailhead, from the intersection of SR 167 and SR 410 near Sumner, follow SR 410 east. After 5.7 miles, turn right onto S. Prairie Road E. In 4.1 miles, turn right onto Pioneer Way E and look for the South Prairie trailhead sign.

For Buckley access, from the intersection of SR 167 and SR 410 near Sumner, follow SR 410 toward Yakima. After 12.5 miles, you'll arrive in Buckley. Turn right onto Park Avenue, and then turn left onto N. River Road. Look for Buckley Log Show parking on the left.

For the closest access to Cascade Junction, from the intersection of SR 167 and SR 410 near Sumner, follow SR 410 toward Yakima. Go 11.8 miles, and bear right onto SR 165/S. River Road. Look for a gravel parking lot on the right in about 1 mile.

For Wilkeson access, from the intersection of SR 167 and SR 410 near Sumner, follow SR 410 toward Yakima. After 10.7 miles, turn right onto Mundy Loss Road. In 1.2 miles, turn left onto SR 162, and then turn right onto SR 165. Follow SR 165 2.8 miles to the Wilkeson welcome arch, and look for the parking lot on the right.

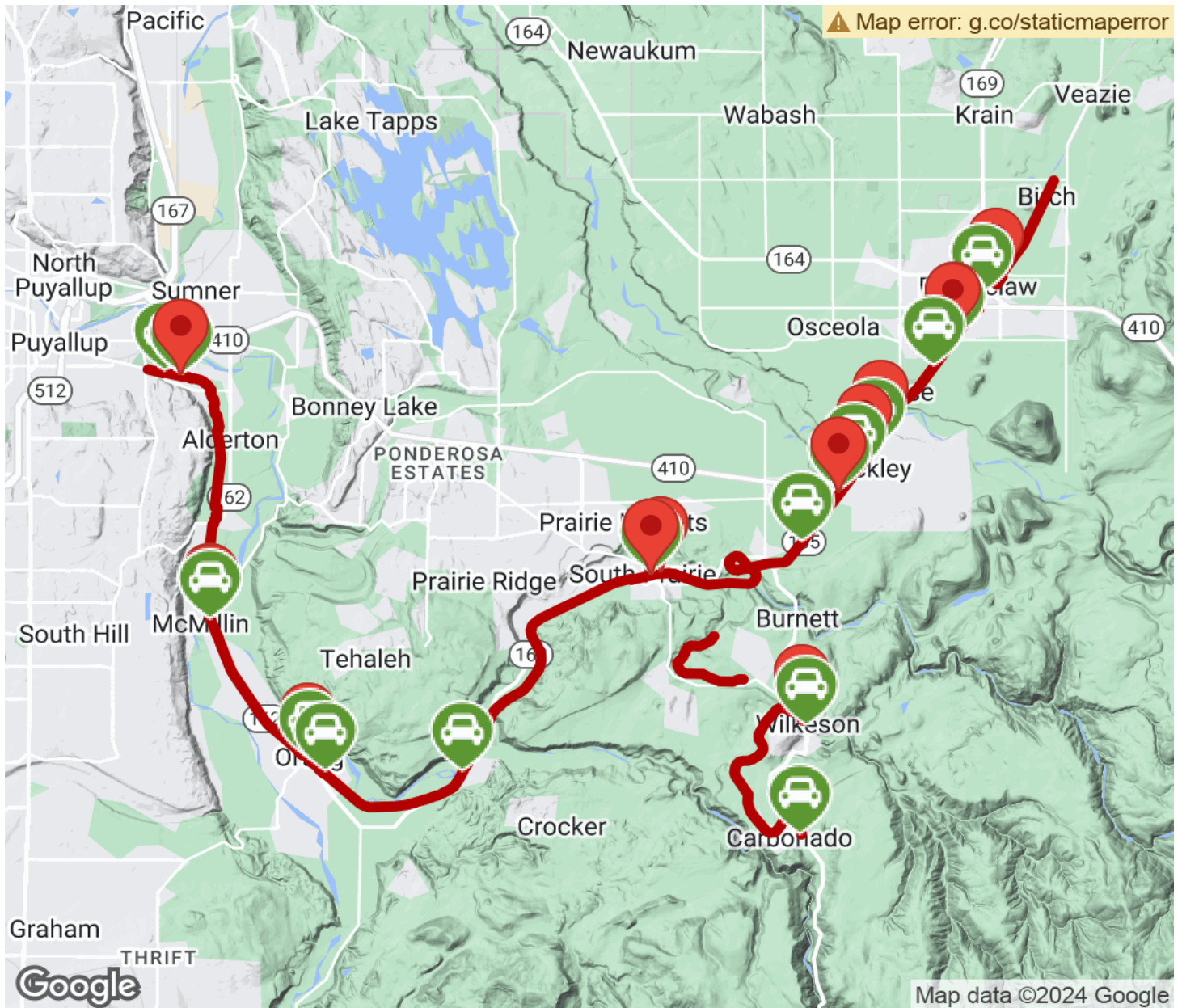
For Carbonado access, from the intersection of SR 167 and SR 410 near Sumner, follow SR 410 toward Yakima. After 10.7 miles, turn right onto Mundy Loss Road. In 1.2 miles, turn left onto SR 162, and then turn right onto SR 165. Follow SR 165 for 5.1 miles to Pershing Avenue on the right.

For Enumclaw access from Interstate 405 in Renton, take Exit 4 onto SR 169 toward Maple Valley. Follow SR 169 south for 25.5 miles, and turn left onto SR 164/Griffin Avenue in Enumclaw. In three blocks, turn right onto Railroad Street. Public parking is available on either side of the road.



Foothills Trail (WA)

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
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