

## Informational and educational resources

Objective I-1: Provide consistent and readily available visitor information

**THE NEED:** Information about recreational opportunities, trails and other amenities in the Carbon River Corridor is hard to find both inside and outside of the corridor. A few brochures and maps have been created over the years but were not widely available and are now out-of-date. Information provided online by various organizations about available amenities and key interest areas is generally vague and often incorrect. Gateway cities and towns as well as public agencies will work together to create a comprehensive branding and marketing effort that identifies recreational opportunities that exist within the corridor, to clarify expectations and to provide needed information for visitors before they journey to this area and after they arrive.

### We heard you!

Public and stakeholder input included:

- Expanding visitor services and information.
- Enhancing infrastructure:
  - Signage
- Desire to conserve natural and historic resources.

### General information

Before journeying into the corridor, visitors must be prepared with information about what is available so that they can make smart decisions about what to bring. As cell service ends at the outer limits of the Town of Wilkeson, maps and information one can download from home are essential. An awareness of the lack of restrooms and water past Wilkeson allows visitors to manage their expectations and plan accordingly. Encouraging visitors to stop and view the kiosk in Wilkeson is essential, as it is one last reminder about the wilderness visitors are about to enter.

The following actions have been planned to prepare visitors who choose to venture into the Carbon River Corridor:

Action	Lead Organization	Partners
<b>I-1-1</b> Develop an online application to allow visitors to virtually view the entrance to Mount Rainier National Park before they leave home.	National Park Service – Mount Rainier National Park	
<b>I-1-2</b> Develop one central Carbon River Corridor information website.	TBD	National Park Service – Mount Rainier National Park, US Forest Service, Pierce County Parks, Foothills Rails to Trails
<b>I-1-3</b>	Pierce County Parks	Town of Wilkeson

Provide information at the Wilkeson visitor center (R-2-10/R-2-11) and highway signs urging visitors to stop in Wilkeson for information and supplies.		
<b>I-1-4</b> Provide an audit to stakeholder groups to ensure that any information currently available is correct.	TBD	National Park Service – Mount Rainier National Park, US Forest Service, Washington Trails Assoc.
<b>I-1-5</b> Evaluate the need for additional visitor experience tools.	MORA, Pierce County Parks	TBD

### Branding and tourism

The Carbon River Corridor continues to experience growth in visitation from regional, national, and international tourists – many who come to the Corridor ill-prepared to experience the region safely and comfortably. A proactive branding and market plan can support the economic growth of cities and towns outside of the corridor which could act as gateways into this area by providing hotel stays, supplies, and restaurants. Tour companies could lead groups from Tacoma, Seattle, and the Sea-Tac airport to popular, as well as less-visited areas of the corridor, but they lack awareness of this area’s recreational or historical opportunities. Improved visitor services or infrastructure and lodging partners would be needed for a tourism campaign to commence.

The following actions are being planned to elevate the region’s status as a destination:

Action	Lead Organization	Partners
<b>I-1-6</b> Develop a messaging plan for the Carbon River corridor that all partners can use (also see I-1-7 and I-1-8).	TBD	Mount Rainier National Park, Pierce County Parks, US Forest Service, other landowners
<b>I-1-7</b> Develop virtual tours of the area based on recreational and historical opportunities.	TBD	Chambers of Commerce (Wilkeson, Carbonado, Buckley, Orting, Sumner),
<b>I-1-8</b> Write articles about the corridor in stakeholder newsletters and websites.	TBD	Foothills Rails to Trails Coalition, ForeverGreen Trails, Washington Trails Association, Foothills Historical Society

**Signage**

An information kiosk and associated highway signage directing visitors to it were installed in the Town of Wilkeson in June 2020. This location has been popular with visitors and much appreciated, demonstrating the need for additional signage before and throughout the corridor directing visitors to attractions and services. These signs should be culturally sensitive, taking into consideration any tribal names for locations as well as the fact that not all visitors speak English.

The following actions will determine the type and locations for these signs:

Action	Lead Organization	Partners
<b>I-1-9</b> Convene a signage work group for logo development, sign standardization and common symbolism.	National Park Service – Mount Rainier National Park	Pierce County Parks, US Forest Service, other landowners
<b>I-1-10</b> Conduct an audit of existing signage within and outside of the corridor.	TBD	TBD – Friends of Carbon, Foothills Rails to Trails
<b>I-1-11</b> Install rules signs on private, county, and federal property signifying the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Rules</li> <li>• No Parking</li> <li>• No Camping</li> <li>• No Shooting</li> <li>• No Dumping or Littering</li> </ul>	Landowners for each property	Pierce County Parks, US Forest Service, Fruit Growers Supply, National Park Service – Mount Rainier National Park, Carbon River Glacier Club, other private landowners
<b>I-1-12</b> Install interpretive signage at important cultural, historic, or natural resource sites (also see N-1-4).	Pierce County Parks, other site landowners	Foothills Rails to Trails Coalition, Foothills Historic Society, Tribes, Puyallup Watershed Council
<b>I-1-13</b> Install wayfinding signage from the gateway towns of Buckley, Orting, Sumner, etc.	Pierce County Planning and Public Works WSDOT	National Park Service – Mount Rainier National Park, US Forest Service, Pierce County Parks

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In order to move actions for this topic forward, the following will be needed:

- Defining a marketing strategy with gateway town mayors, Chambers of Commerce, and recreation providers.
- Funding for interpretive signage and common tourism promotion information/webpage.]