

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Turkey Mountain Urban Wilderness
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Tulsa, OK

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River Parks Authority Takes First Steps To Implement Turkey Mountain Trails Improvements

Upgrades Will Enhance Trail User Experiences and Environmental Sustainability

River Parks Authority officials are announcing today that work will begin this month on a much-anticipated initial phase of trail rejuvenation recommended by the adopted 2020 Turkey Mountain Master Plan. The 1:00 p.m. gathering at the main trailhead of the Turkey Mountain Urban Wilderness signals the exciting first steps to reinvigorate miles of natural-surfaced trails that wind throughout the rugged terrain. Trails are the primary means by which most visitors experience Turkey Mountain, and trail rehabilitation will unlock more of the park's tremendous potential. Expected to join Authority Board members and staff for the occasion are representatives of the City of Tulsa, Tulsa County, private funders, and park users. A representative of the design and construction firm, Progressive Trail Design of Bentonville, Arkansas, will also be present.

Extensive public input for the Master Plan made clear the desire to "keep Turkey wild." To that end, the organic contours of Turkey Mountain's unique and varied terrain will guide best practices to mitigate damage from erosion and over-use, enhancing trails to appeal to all fitness levels. Progressive Trail Design will lead the invigoration of key areas of the dirt trail network for this initial phase. The firm is known for its extensive work on the world-renowned recreational trails system of northwest Arkansas. With a focus on environmental sustainability to assure the park's viability for generations to come, work will be conducted to minimize disruption of normal year-round trail use.

Phase One work is expected to require 9 to 12 months, impacting roughly 400 acres of the Wilderness and resulting in 12 miles of improved multi-use trails for hikers, runners, and mountain bikers. The area stretches from the upper parking lot at 61st and Elwood, north to Mooser Creek and east-to-west from the Arkansas River to U.S. 75. Portions of the trails will be closed only where work is actively occurring; signage, along with regular social media and website posts, will keep park users updated on what to expect and areas that are closed. "Turkey Mountain is one of Tulsa's most valuable and valued assets," said Matt Meyer, River Parks Authority's Executive Director. "Trail renovations may cause some temporary inconvenience, but the outcome will be well worth it. We encourage everyone to be patient and think of this work as you would for any historic preservation, because that's really what it is – assuring the Wilderness can be enjoyed by everyone for years to come."

When a section of trail is completed, it will be opened immediately to allow the improved surface to be compacted by cycling and foot traffic. Trail users encountering any unexpected trail closures should retrace their steps rather than pushing through the woods and underbrush where poison ivy, ticks, and snakes are common much of the year. Trail users should not enter into any active construction areas for their own safety and that of the work crews.

The initial Phase One improvements are funded by over \$3.3MM raised to date in private gifts from more than 80 foundations, companies, and individuals. In recent days, the Authority was pleased to learn that Mayor Bynum has recommended Turkey Mountain receive \$1MM in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding through the City of Tulsa, and Tulsa County officials approved an equal amount in ARPA funds for the project. These contributions align with the part of the ARPA that supports recovery of tourism losses related to the pandemic, a recognition that the Wilderness is a regional destination attraction. The ARPA funding will add to public Vision Tulsa funds of \$2.1MM and a \$375,000 Recreational Trails grant.

Many opportunities for public and private investment at Turkey Mountain remain, with the Master Plan calling for five phases to be undertaken over time. Work will be scheduled to the limit of available funds as more investments allow continued implementation of the elements suggested by the master planning team, stakeholders, and the public.

Watch the promotional video here: <https://youtu.be/nYXZWi-nkIg>

In celebration of the Ground Breaking, River Parks will have a trail cleanup day at Turkey Mountain on Saturday, November 6th. Those willing to help should meet at the main parking lot between 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.

About River Parks Authority

Offering the best in outdoor recreation, River Parks' 26 miles of asphalt-surfaced trails weave past gathering areas, playgrounds, fountains, and sculptures along the banks of the Arkansas River in Tulsa. Additionally, River Parks owns and manages the Turkey Mountain Urban Wilderness, the largest urban wilderness park in Oklahoma with over 30 miles of dirt trails that are perfect for hiking, mountain biking and trail running. The river corridor is home to a variety of wildlife and the park features a splash pad, fishing, disc golf, sports fields, and the Sand Bar and Yard Cafes.

River Parks hosts or produces outdoor events throughout the year featuring concerts, festivals, fireworks, and sports competitions. Park facilities are also available for private activities such as company parties. River Parks was established as a public-private partnership in 1974. Tulsa County and the City of Tulsa provide the majority of funds for day-to-day River Parks operations, supplemented by private contributions large and small that make River Parks one of the premier public park facilities in the region. For more information, visit www.riverparks.org.

About Progressive Trails Design

Progressive Trail Design is a full-service, planning, design + build firm focusing on outdoor recreational trails. The firm is recognized for outstanding contributions to the extensive trail network in northwest Arkansas and beyond; its client-focused strategies seek to uncover and capitalize on the potential of available landscapes. A diversified team of professionals provides both design and construction services to bring each project to fruition on time and on budget. Mindful construction practices emphasize environmental sustainability that facilitates the maintenance of trails and the user experience. For more information: www.progressivetraildesign.com

Photo Credits for attached photos: Shane Bevel/River Parks



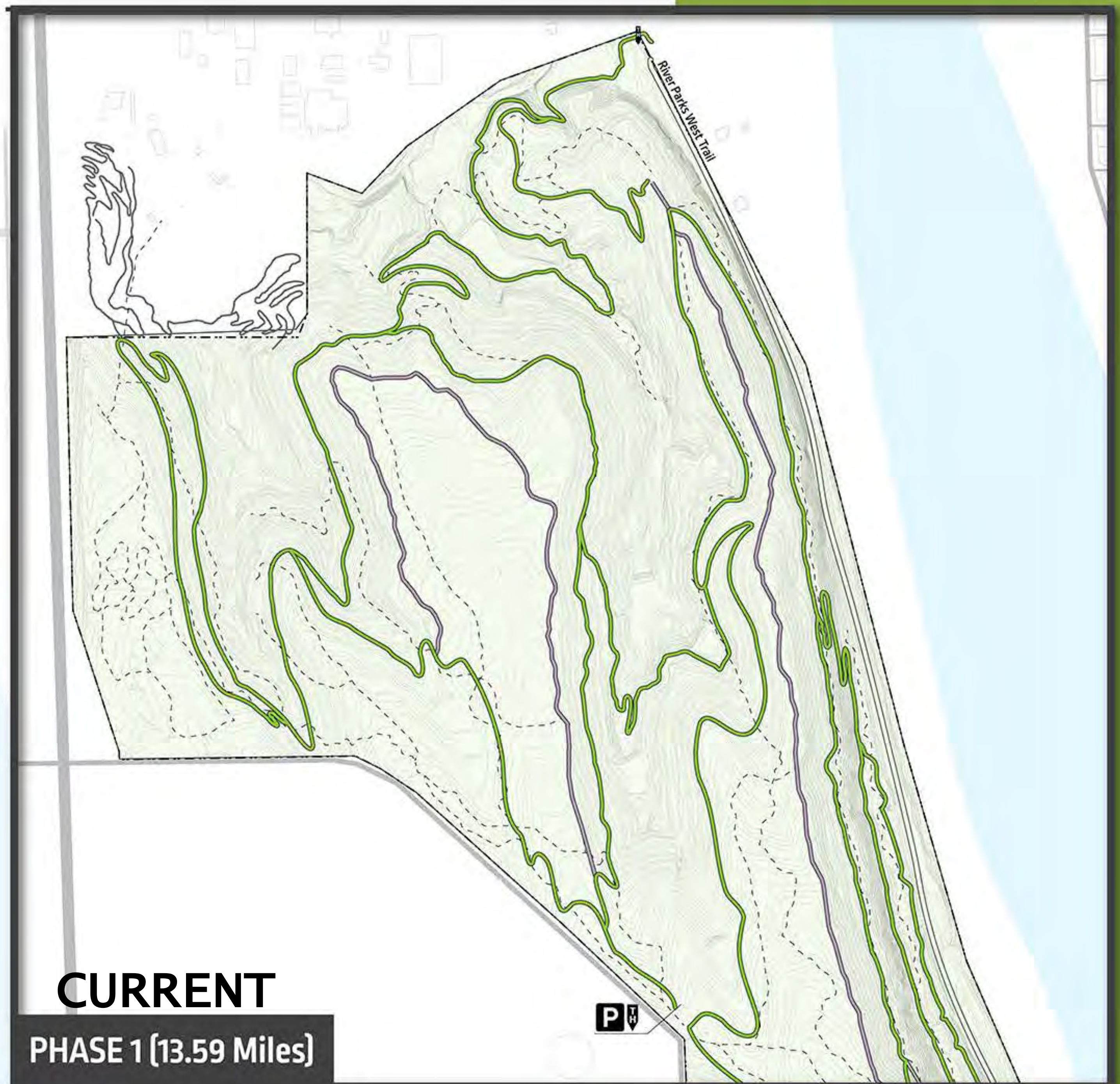
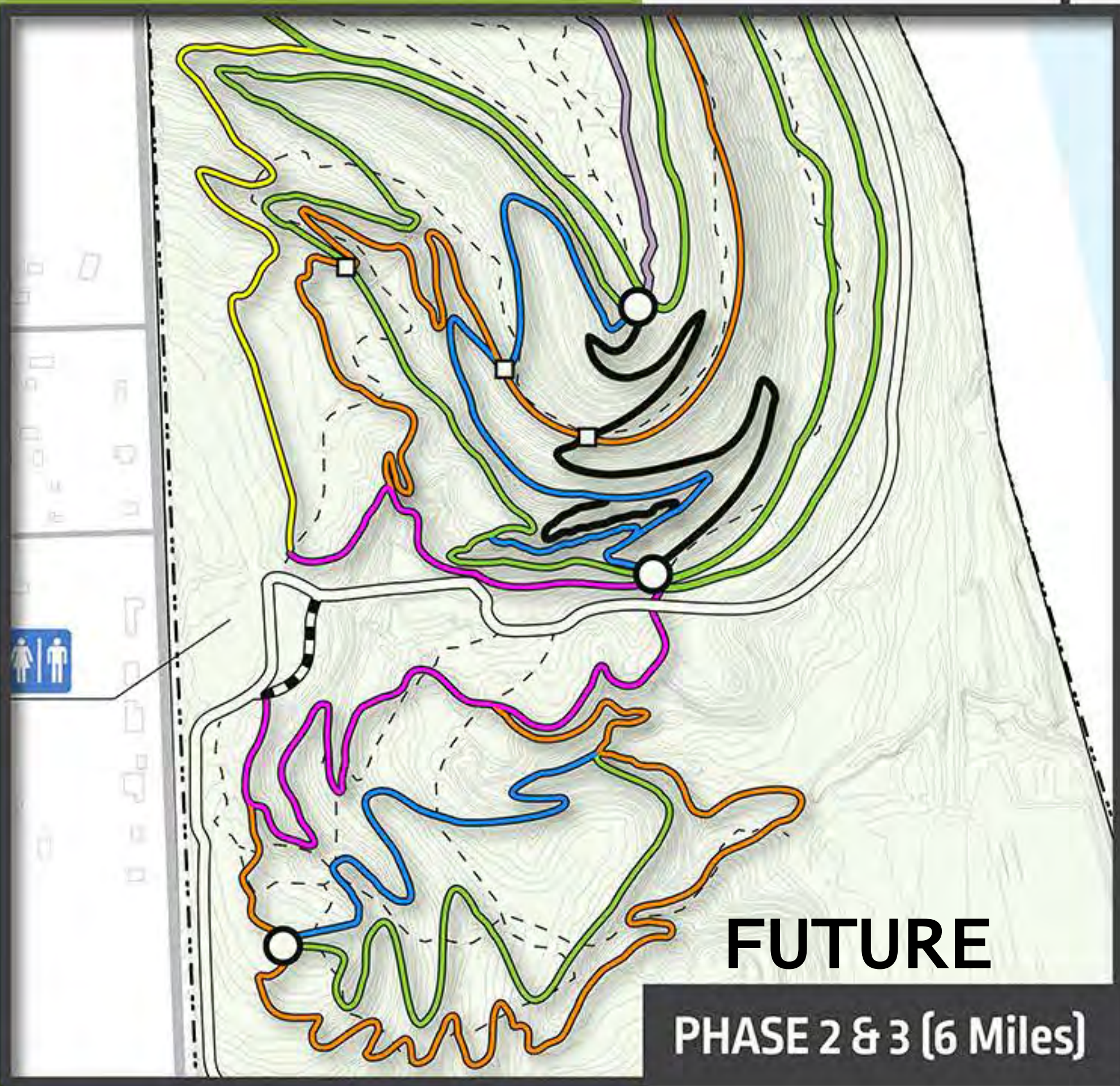
MASTER PLAN



TURKEY MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS AREA

TRAILS MASTER PLAN





- LEGEND**
- GREEN SINGLETRACK
 - TRAIL TO REMAIN
 - NEW ENTRY TRAIL
 - ORANGE TRAIL
 - GATEWAY SKILL
 - GREEN FLOW TRAIL
 - BLUE FLOW TRAIL
 - GREEN DOWNHILL TRAIL
 - BLUE DOWNHILL TRAIL
 - BLACK DOWNHILL TRAIL
 - CURRENT TRAIL ALIGNMENTS
 - P** PARKING
 - B** BATHROOMS
 - TH** TRAILHEAD
 - H** HUB
 - F** FLYOVER
 - N**











