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Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scope of the Gold Creek Valley Restoration Project. We have reviewed the documents and have the following comments.

OFFICE OF COLUMBIA RIVER

Ecology's Office of Columbia River supports the Gold Creek Valley Restoration Project and encourages the restoration of Gold Creek and its associated floodplain/wetland complex.

Changes in the local hydrology of the valley as a result of the construction of roads, gravel pits, logging, and drainage lines have a negative impact on the instream flows of Gold Creek during critical times of the year, resulting in the mortality of federally threatened bull trout. The USFS should evaluate groundwater-surface water interactions and groundwater flow directions as a result of this project proposal.

As part of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan, the Office of Columbia River and its partners are heavily investing both state and federal dollars in the restoration of salmonids and their associated spawning and rearing habitats throughout the Yakima River Basin. The successful restoration of Gold Creek and its associated floodplain is an important component to the overall restoration of the Yakima River Basin and achieving the goals of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan.

If you have any questions or would like to respond to these Office of Columbia River comments, please contact Michael Callahan at (509) 454-4270 or email at michael.callahan@ecy.wa.gov.