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Organization:
Title:
Comments: The stretch of Gold Creek just above Gold Creek Pond has been documented to have seasonally dried up well before the borrow pit began from which Gold Creek Pond was created. I oppose filling Gold Creek Pond because filling the pond with dirt will not cause Gold Creek to re-water to help the Bull Trout, a fact which historical data and experts do not dispute.
Additionally, climatological data gathered in the vicinity of Snoqualmie Pass over the past 70 years clearly indicate declining snowpack and subsequently less runoff later in the season. The background studies for the proposed project do not take environmental changes into consideration.
The concept of filling Gold Creek Pond as a potential solution for a threatened species was based on faulty opinions and faulty conclusions, which have subsequently been stated to have been incorrect by the teams of scientists and stakeholders proposing this project. In summary, there is not a scientific basis for filling Gold Creek Pond.

Undertaking a large-scale project such as filling Gold Creek Pond with dirt will take a number of years and clearly have negative short-term impacts on many species, which are currently (and in growing numbers) using the wildlife corridor recently improved by the long, elevated bridge at the west end of Lake Keechelus. Thousands of dump truck loads of dirt passing by through the wildlife corridor during the project may cause other environmental damage from the resulting noise, dust and carbon emissions from the project.

Gold Creek Pond also serves the residents of Snoqualmie Pass and Gold Creek Valley in particular, as a back-up fire-water location for wild fires in Upper Kittitas county. A small private community is present up-stream from Gold Creek Pond, and in the event of a fire starting between I-90 and the community, residents may not be able to evacuate through the fire. The proximity of a deep pond for helicopers to fill fire water buckets could save lives.

I strongly encourage USFS to stop the project from further consideration for the negative impacts outlined above, as well as the positive contributions of Gold Creek Pond.