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Comments: I'm writing as a private landowner in Gold Creek Valley, to express strong support for evidence-based decision-making regarding proposals to address this issue. I am aware of very vocal opposition to restoration studies and design proposals; it's my opinion those in opposition are speaking for their selfish preferences: "Gold Creek Pond is pretty. I like it. I don't want my pretty views to change."

Given the crises confronting our nation's wildlife and ecosystems, habitat conservation and ecological restoration are among the most important tools we have to address the stresses on these treasured natural resources. Our public lands are the best places to do this work because they are owned by us all, and because they are the large-scale, interconnected landscapes that wildlife populations and ecosystem processes require. Where we have suitable public lands we should restore habitat and the ecosystem processes - like hydrology - that support that habitat.

And within these large landscapes, river or stream corridors such as Gold Creek are places where, acre-for-acre, we have the best chance of enhancing habitat for today. They are also the habitats most likely to be resilient in a warming climate.

Gold Creek Valley is widely recognized as a key link in the north-south movements of wildlife populations. Migration pathways such as Gold Creek Valley will be more important than ever in a changing climate, and maximizing habitat quality and productivity in such places will provide critical support for a wide range of species.

If we could recognize the wounds in a landscape that reduced its value to wildlife and its functioning as an ecosystem, who would want to keep it that way when the technology and resources to fix the worst of the wounds are available? I have over 10 years' worth of fond memories of Gold Creek Pond, but nothing would keep me from supporting a science-based strategy for Gold Creek and Gold Creek Pond that is designed and vetted by *qualified* professionals. I'm confident that the Forest Service and its partners are better qualified than the pilots, anesthesiologists and mechanical engineers who refute the science gathered by experienced hydro-geomorphologists and can design an outcome that will enhance the hydrology of Gold Creek while providing equivalent or better opportunities for recreation and environmental education than the current configuration of Gold Creek Pond offers.

But the proposal that is ultimately adopted must be the one that best serves the wildlife and natural resources of the greater Cascade Mountains ecosystem. I ask that the most sustainable practices be used, with the least carbon footprint possible.