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Comments: I believe the proposed project needs to include more substantive plans for offsetting the significant loss of Gold Creek Valley as a winter recreation access point.

I recommend the Forest Service investigate the feasibility of the following additional solutions to help address the already difficult parking issues in the Snoqualmie Pass vicinity:

Provide parking at the PCT North (Kendall Katwalk) parking lot to improve access to the Commonwealth Basin for snowshoeing and backcountry skiing

Allow winter recreationalists to continue to access F.S Road 4832-144 in the Gold Creek Valley, which is outside the project area and provides snowshoeing opportunities and backcountry skiing access

Allow recreationalists to access the upper Gold Creek Valley via trail 1314 by including clear signage and/or temporary trail markers as necessary to maintain closure of project area

Expand parking on Lake Mardee Road and pursue opportunities to acquire the adjacent private land, where snowshoers can access F.S road 9090 and provide additional snow play opportunities in the flat open area.

Work with WSDOT to allow parking on the north side of I-90 at Exit 62 and add signage and trail connector for cross country skiers and snowshoers to access Cabin Creek and Mount Amabalis trail system.

I believe that the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest is responsible for working with their colleagues in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and private landowners to help address the winter parking issues at Snoqualmie Pass, including the added stress caused by this project.

The draft environmental assessment currently predicts that construction will impact Gold Creek Pond will year-round for 5-7 years, and potentially up to 10 years. Limiting the closure period to the extent possible would help mitigate the large anticipated impacts on winter recreation. Additionally i would like to see a project map documenting the temporary impacts and road closures that could be distributed to the recreational community.

I understand that the Gold Creek Sno-park (F.S 4832) will still be open, even though the trail and pond and recreational area will be closed. It would be helpful for the closure map to direct users towards alternate recreation options if they show up at the location and no longer have an easily accessible recreation destination available.

Thank you!