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Comments: There are multiple concerns with the proposed gold Creeek Restoration plan:

- 10 years is far too long for such a simple project, which will drive up the overall costs considerably, as well as increasing the impacts to the users, wildlife, and delaying the benefits of the project. The transcontinental railroad was built in 6 years, largely by hand. Apply more resources and finish it faster. If there is some reason that this is not feasible, the work should be done in smaller zones, with access allowed where work is not active.
- The project description assumes a single plan with no discussion of options considered. As an engineer, I can think of several alternatives that might retain the existing infrastructure, greatly reduce construction costs and still achieve the majority of the desired objectives.
- Little discussion is provided on the impacts to other wildlife of a primary corridor through the mountains and past the interstate due to this very large (relative to the overall valley corridor) and very long disruption. These impacts should be better assessed and appropriate mitigations incorporated into the planning.
- The assessment of impact to users is very cursory with limited thought or analysis applied, particularly with regard to winter access. The existing Sno-parks are already at or above capacity on most weekend days. Additionally, the expected demand for these resources is only going to go up over the very long project time frame. The lower elevation sno-parks are often limited in snow, a condition that will likely only worsen over the course of this extremely long project due to climate change. Thus, the primary viable sno parks for much of the year are Hyak, Gold Creek, Crystal Springs and Cabin Creek. It is not feasible for the existing sno parks to take up the displaced capacity if Gold Creek is closed to access. The report notes what sounds like a very large alternative of using Summit Snoqualmie for a recreation alternative, but this is a very expensive option beyond the means of many people to afford. Whether for downhill skiing or snow tubing. Thus, it should be noted that this planned closure disproportionately impacts the lower income tier of users and young families. Additionally, while Hyak has a small sledding hill, Hyak, Crystal Springs and Cabin Creek are largely designed to provide access for snowmobiles, cross country skiing and snowshoeing. Many of the users of Gold Creek just want a place to walk and play in the snow, which Gold Creek is ideally suited for and the other sno parks are not. Further, based on my observations over the years, the majority of the users of the Gold Creek area are the least informed and prepared for winter recreation. Gold Creek is one of the safest places available for these users. Displacing these users to many of the other sno parks without improvements to the areas will increase their exposure to many objective hazards they are poorly equipped to manage, and could greatly increase the likelihood of visitor injuries or death. The planned restrictions on grooming of the Hyak adjacent terrain near the lake further exacerbates this issue by taking away recreation options at Hyak most aligned with the needs of typical Gold Creek users.
- The noted "equivalent" ADA accessible trail options are all far inferior to the Gold Creek area for providing access to an alpine environment. While loss of access might be acceptable for the 1-2 years this project should take, over the course of 10 years, this is a major disruption and loss for users with ADA needs.
- It is recommended that:
  - Project plans be further assessed to evaluate lower cost, faster alternatives that could still meet the aquatic ecosystem improvement objectives
  - Project planning be improved to greatly shorten the overall time frame required to reduce costs, reduce the many adverse impacts and to realize project benefits sooner.
  - Complementary improvements to other Sno Park areas should be made to accommodate the displaced Gold Creek user base, including creation of additional parking at both Hyak and Crystal Springs, increased walking and snow play areas for both sno parks. These improvements can be accomplished with only minor increases in the overall project costs. Allowing grooming of the roads near the lake at Hyak can be done for free and will at least minimize some of the impacts. no clear impact analysis provides justification of why grooming of the roads through the winter is not acceptable, given its extremely minor potential for net increased contamination relative

to the other existing impacts to the overall watershed from roads, grooming along the Palouse-Cascades trail, homes and offroad and snow mobile usage.

- Replan the project to reduce the impacts to the ADA community and/ or create adjacent temporary summer ADA trails at Hyak or near Gold Creek.