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First name: Christine

Last name: Syrjala

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am concerned about the future restriction of 100-300 citizens/day that access the Gold Creek Valley year-round. Having been a visitor to this spectacular part of our state for more than 50 years and observed the rapid increase of visitors, especially over the past ten years, I find it incredulous that closing off access to this significant section of our I-90 outdoor environs has been deemed to have "No Significant Impact on the human environment."

Citizens who are not permitted to access an area that they have regularly visited for many years need to be provided options to recreate within a reasonable commute of their previous destination.

Although I enthusiastically support the environmental improvement of the Gold Creek and Yakima River drainages, I believe citizens need to be provided other proximate locations for hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing - "recreating." The current trails and Sno-Parks are already over-crowded.

Several reasonable options have been proposed:

- 1.Continue to offer winter grooming of the Keechelus Lake boat launch road for skiers and snowshoers.
- 2.Provide an additional SnoPark on the north side of I-90 at Exit 62.
- 3.Expand SnoPark parking on the north side of I-90 at Exit 54 that accesses Kendall Lakes, Road 9090, and the Mardee Lake area.
- 4.Allow continued access to Road 144 in Gold Creek Valley from FS Road 4832 when construction is not active.
- 5.Allow access to upper Gold Creek Valley via Trail 1314.

I am concerned that closing hiking trails year-round for multiple years will lead to serious trail maintenance issues with a long-term impact. Also, as a conservationist, I think it is important to provide adequate recreation areas so people do not build unofficial trails and campsites thereby destroying undeveloped, natural areas.