APPENDIX II

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ISSUE	SOURCE (letter#)	RESPONSE	FINAL DECISION
Group Size (FS preferred alternative is any combination of 16. Reference EA page 57.)			
Responses that felt the maximum group size should be any combination of 12.	4,5,11,12, 13,14,17 19,20,23,26,28,29, 30,31,32,42,44,52	This was considered in Alternative D but limiting the group size to 12 does not meet the needs of stock users who have been a historical user group of the A-P. A 65% reduction of this use is not justified to meet the desired future condition as described on page 12.	
Responses that felt the maximum group size should be any combination of 10	7	See Above	
Responses that felt the maximum group size should be any combination of 16 with the option to exceed this under permit	18	"Permitting" larger group sizes had merit as an option but more than likely the person responsible for authorizing this under permit may not be available or have the time to review requests in a timely manner.	
Responses that felt the maximum group size should be any combination of 16.	12, 20, 25, 33, 35,41,45	This was considered in Alternative C and was the preferred group size in the EA. Many stock users felt that this was perhaps more of a reduction than was needed based on the desired future condition and the existing condition.	
Responses that felt the maximum group size should be 10 people and 15 stock.	6,9,21	While the comments from stock users were supportive of this reduction, it would not be enough to meet the desired future condition. Alternative E (EA page 27) considered a group limit very similar to this, i.e., 12 people and 15 stock.	
Responses that felt the maximum	49	This was considered in our Alternatives A and B of the	

group size should remain as is at 15 people and 20 stock.		EA but research and experience have shown that large groups create more damage to vegetation and soil, both in campsites and along the trail, than smaller groups. Not only do large groups take up more space but they also interact differently. Large groups diminish peoples' feeling of solitude more than do smaller groups. In addition, the A-P has few large impacted campsites suitable for large groups. To maintain wilderness quality, it is important to minimize these large sites. For these reasons this group size was too large and would not meet the desired future condition as described on page 12.	
Responses that felt the maximum group size should be any combination of 20.	1	While comments from stock users were supportive, this still had the potential for large numbers of stock and would not meet the desired future condition. See above.	
Criteria should be based on type of stock. For example llamas should be permitted at larger numbers as they are less impactive.	35,56	Llama use is infrequent in the A-P. Twelve llamas are more than would be needed to support the allowed maximum number of people. There is no need to require different group limits based on type of stock.	
Should establish a separate quota for people and stock vs. heartbeats.	37	The decision is to set the group limit at 12 people and 12 head of stock. This size will apply to all groups, at all times, including those which are commercially outfitted. This decision decreases both people (20%) and stock (40%) compared to the existing limit. In many cases this would reduce overnight stock users to a smaller party size and it would encourage restraint when deciding how much gear to bring. Day riders could be in groups as large as 12. This flexibility of a larger group size for day rides is justified because day riders generally have fewer impacts than those associated with overnight use. This limit would allow the same number of day riders as day hikers or backpackers.	**X**

Outfitters and Guides (Common to alternatives B-D is to cap existing outfitters to their 10 year actual high plus an			

additional 50 days if demand is there and monitoring shows that impacts are acceptable. Reference EA pages 58 and 87.)			
Responses that the cap should be the 10 year high plus 50.	1,15,18,45,50	This was considered in Alternatives B-D in the EA for comment. There are a number of new outfitters in the A-P that have only a few years of operation. Current use is much below historic use levels when the original A-P Plan was written. The 50 additional service days would allow flexibility with an outfitter who may book an extra person for a trip or an extra trip. It would also allow a small amount of expansion over the anticipated 10 year life of the plan.	
Responses that the cap should be the 10 year high with no additional days.	7,40,46	Alternative E in the EA considered a similar proposal (page 27). Outfitting and guiding is an activity specifically provided for in the Wilderness Act under Special Provisions, Sec. 4 (d)(6) and has been a historic use in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness. Use days for currently permitted outfitters will be capped at the 10-year, actual use, high and no additional use days will be permitted except for those available from a pool of **unused** days that will exist if current outfitters do not use those days allotted. Transfer of days from the pool will be allowed only amongst days of like kind and same season. For example, horseback, fall hunting days could not be switched with summer, backpacking days. The "pool" concept will allow some flexibility but will not result in any permanent increase in the use days for any given outfitter beyond their high use in the last 10 years.	**X**
Responses that the cap on use days should be the 10 year "average" with no additional days	4,5,8,11,12,14,171 9,24,25,28,29,3031 ,32,43,44,52	Using the ten year average would punish new outfitters who have only operated for a few years and have not established their business.	
Responses that the cap should be	33, 49,54	There are fewer permitted outfitters using the A-P today	

some reduction over existing.		than in the past 15-20 years. Use days are lower. New outfitters should be given the opportunity to establish their business by allowing them to grow at least to the 10 year high the previous outfitter owning the business was permitted.	
We support the direction that visitors using outfitters and guides abide by the same rules as non-outfitted visitors, including stay limits during the hunting season.	4,5,8,11,14,17,19,28,30,31,32	While all regulations which apply to the public also apply to outfitters, there can be an exception with stay limits as stated on page 58 of the EA. In the case of assigned sites, the 14 (Bitterroot NF) or 16 (Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF) day limit can be exceeded as specified under the special use permit in the operating plan. This was considered in Alternatives B-D.	**X**
New Outfitters (Under all alternatives new outfitters will be considered if they meet criteria specified in Table II, EA page 58.)			**X**
Remove criteria from plan and handle individual requests through the NEPA process	11,17,19,24,31,32	We will go through the NEPA process before permitting new outfitters in the A-P in addition to following the criteria specified in Table II, EA page 58.	
Common to all action alternatives is to permit up to 100 incidental commercial/institutional use days annually per district. EA			

page 31.			
Responses that no additional commercial/institutional use days be permitted.	4,5,6,7,11,12,17, 19,23,24,26,28,29, 30,32,43,46	Incidental use days are days that may be issued to a commercial or institutional entity that may want to take a trip through the A-P. An example is a Sierra Club trip. The decision is to limit this use to 200 use days Wilderness-wide instead of 100 days per District since most groups taking trips through the Wilderness cross District Boundaries. 200 additional service days is small when looking at the entire Wilderness. For example, this increase would equate to two groups of 10 for 10 days each. If a cap is set on institutional outfitters then additional requests would be denied. These days are not intended for repeated use by the same group nor are these days intended for existing A-P outfitters. Institutional days will be available during an "open season."	**X**
Self-issuing permits (FS preferred alternative is to require self issuing permits. Reference EA page 57.)			
Responses that are supportive of this requirement	4,5,6,7,8,10,11,12 17,19,21,23,25 26,28,29,30,31,32 34,38	This was considered in Alternatives B and C in the EA for comment. The decision is to require a self-issuing registration by all people entering the wilderness. The registration will be available at the trailhead, will not limit the number of people, will not assign campsites, and will be free. Boxes with completed forms will be locked for security purposes. Names and street addresses will be optional. City, State, and County will be a portion of the mandatory information we are gathering with the registration.	**X**
Responses that are opposed to self-issuing permits.	9,13,41,44,49,51, 54,55,58	See above. This was considered in Alternatives A in the EA (page 24). Our reasons for requiring registration are several. 1) Registration forms with detachable	

		information are an ideal way to disseminate "Leave No Trace" information and changes in regulations. 2) We want to be able to assess use trends in the Anaconda-Pintler. Better use data will help refine management and help us minimize impacts. 3) We have had a voluntary registration in place for several years and compliance has been spotty. A self-issuing permit allows the maximum spontaneity and provides an opportunity for an exchange of information.	
Respondent asked "what would be the exact purpose of the self-issuing permit? To keep track of people, or to determine the exact areas that get the most use?"	52	See above.	
Campfire Restrictions (FS preferred is to have campfire restrictions within 1/4 mile of 16			

lakes. Reference EA page 57.)			
Responses supportive of the preferred alternative.	7,10,26	This was considered in Alternative C and the decision is to close the following lakes to campfires within 1/4 mile: Oreamnos, Sawed Cabin, Upper Phyllis, Upper Carpp, Surprise, Bear, Buck, Emerald. Lost Lakes, Lower Phyllis, Park Lakes, Sauer, Continental, unnamed lake below Queener Mtn., unnamed lake west of Warren Lake. This does not mean the lakes are closed to camping. It simply means that campfires may not be constructed within 1/4 mile of the lakeshore. The lakes we have chosen for closures are those that currently show a marked lack of firewood or those that are in pristine condition and therefore are vulnerable to degradation if campfires were to become commonplace.	**X**
Responses that felt that the restriction should be expanded to include the 7 additional lakes listed under Alternative D.	4,5,8,11,17,19,25 28,29,30,31,42	This was considered in Alternative D. All these responses supported the preferred alternative but wanted additional lakes added. Although closure could be extended to these lakes, it is not necessary at this time. The "pay off" of additional restriction would be small because these lakes are already impacted and firewood is available. Enforcement in these areas would be difficult given the users/amount of use and our level of coverage.	
Responses that felt there should be no campfire restrictions	9,15,35	Some action is needed. Research shows campfire closures are one of the most effective measures for stopping impact on vegetation and soils.	
Responses that felt that campfires should be restricted within a 1/4 mile of all lakes	13,44,52	Not necessary at this time. A balance which avoids over-regulating and backlash is needed.	
Consider requiring "leave no trace" campfires vs. "no	37	This is not enforceable. A "LNT campfire" often <u>does</u> leave traces. One person's definition is not the same as	

campfires."		another's. LNT practices have been encouraged in handouts and during field contacts.	
Why does Bear Lake have fire restrictions?	50	Bear Lake is in Zone II. This zone has a high degree of wilderness integrity and a low level of human disturbance. Campsite impacts are minimal and currently the site is in a very pristine condition. Campfire restrictions would help keep the site in this condition.	
Fish Stocking (Reference Appendix IV for stocking requirements common to all action alternatives.)			

Responses that were supportive of the requirement as listed.	10,13, 20,21,27, 32,35,43,44,52, 57	Between the EA and this Decision, several discussions have occurred with representatives of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP). These discussions have focused on the statutory roles and relationships between the agencies as it relates to fisheries management and fish stocking. Appendix IV of the decision package contains new language relative to fisheries management in the A-P. The new language retains the intent of the goals and objectives from the EA, however, three adjustments have been made: 1) We have clarified the text to reflect that MFWP has the statutory authority to manage fisheries and stock fish in wilderness. Certain limitations exist and are spelled out in an interagency Memorandum between the USDA, Forest Service, USDI, Bureau of Land Management and International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies initially adopted in 1986. 2) Minor word changes have been made to goal and objective statements. 3) Forest Service fisheries guidelines have been removed from the document. This change was made to reflect the statutory authority to stock and manage fisheries rests with the state and not the Forest Service. In its place, we have agreed with the state to establish an interagency working group to develop strategies to improve our native fish stocks, manage recreational impacts in the Wilderness and deal with specific issues as they arise. See Appendix IV.	**X**
Responses that felt that there should be no fish stocking in the A-P.	4,5,7,11,12,17,19 23,25,26,28,29, 30,31,35	See above and Appendix IV.	
Responses that felt that stocking decisions should be up to the state.	49, 3	See above and Appendix IV of the decision package.	

What would determine "fishless lakes?" Has Oreamnos Lake been restocked?	52	Fishless lakes are those lakes that do not currently support fish. Oreamnos Lake was repeatedly stocked in the past, but is no longer stocked. Research shows that fish freeze out of this lake in the winter.	
We would like to see a policy requiring planting only of west-slope cutthroat trout in mountain lakes in the AP wilderness.	57	MFWP has the statutory authority to manage fisheries and stock fish in Wilderness. See Appendix IV.	
Mystic Lake Cabin (Common to all action alternatives is the objective to maintain and protect Mystic Lake Cabin from deterioration in a manner that allows for its continued, occasional administrative use. Reference EA page 59.)			
Responses that were supportive of this strategy.	10,50	This was considered in Alternatives B-E. Mystic Lake Cabin has cultural significance as part of the historic component of the wilderness resource. It is eligible for listing under the National Register of Historic Places. The cabin is used only a few times a year usually 4-5 days at a time for administrative use. This includes allowing our trail crews and wilderness ranger to use the cabin when in the area doing work. Cabins used this way tend to be better maintained and last longer. The decision is to continue to use the cabin for administrative use.	**X**
Responses that were opposed to maintaining the cabin and using it for administrative use.	4,8,11,12,17,19,26 28,29,30,32	See above.	
With the 16 day limit in the Wilderness why can the FS use the Mystic Lake Cabin for more	50	See above, cabin rarely used for more than 4-5 days at a time by trail crews or Wilderness rangers.	

than 16 days?			
Weed Control (Reference EA page 59 for FS preferred alternative.)			
Responses that were supportive of the preferred.	6,7,9,10,13,25, 45	This was considered in Alternatives B-E. It is our decision that a combination of education, detection, prevention, and eradication methods will be used to prevent weed infestations before they occur and to eliminate infestations while they are still minimal. New infestations of noxious weeds will be eradicated as soon as possible after detection and inventory. Eradication will be done by hand pulling if possible. Biological or chemical control will be used only after further NEPA analysis. Herbicide applications will be site-specific and only by hand, to minimize effects on non-target species.	**X**
Responses that were opposed to the use of chemicals within the Wilderness.	4,5,8,11,14,17,19 20,24,28,29,30,313 2,34	See above. The A-P is almost entirely free from noxious weeds. Noxious weeds have the potential to drastically change the wilderness. We do not want to see native plant communities displaced by weeds. We want to lay the groundwork for dealing with noxious weeds before they become a major problem. Further discussion of the effects of using herbicides on wilderness values is found in Appendix III of the decision package.	
Use of chemicals within the Wilderness should go through a full NEPA analysis.	32	Any use of chemical control will be used only after further NEPA analysis.	
Respondents concerned about noxious weeds outside the A-P Boundary in adjoining areas.	13	Treatment of weeds outside of the A-P is beyond the scope of this document. Treatment of noxious weeds outside the boundary will be addressed in Forest weed treatment plans and other NEPA documents.	

Barren Core Area (Within Zone IV a barren core area should not exceed 500 sq. ft.)			**X**
Responses that felt that no zone should have a condition where a barren core area exceeds 200 sq. ft.	13,44	Some camps have been heavily used for years and will continue to be heavily used. In these limited areas it makes sense to concentrate the use. Rehabilitation is virtually impossible and use of these areas prevents impacts in other places. Efforts will be made to downsize barren core areas whenever possible.	
Livestock Grazing Setback 200 Feet from Lakes			**X**
Livestock grazing setback should be 300 ft.	13,44	It has been 200 feet for many years. Most people don't measure. The idea is to get stock back from the lakes. This set-back is working well to keep stock away from lakeshores. We don't want to confuse people.	
Camping with Livestock (FS preferred is no camping within a 1/4 mile of Hope, Sawed Cabin, Oreamnos, and Ripple Lakes. ReferenceEA page 58.)			**X**
Camping with livestock should not be permitted within a 1/4 mile of all lakes.	13,44,52	This is unreasonably restrictive. Livestock users, for the most part, are observing the 200 feet setback. Hope Lake is not safe for stock and it is not possible to tether	

		animals 200 feet from the lake, as is already required for all lakes in the A-P. Sawed Cabin and Oreamnos Lakes are both fragile and high evelvation. Both have experienced a marked increase in damage due to stock use in the past few years. Ripple lake is in a small basin unsuitable for camping with stock. It is difficult to secure stock 200 feet from the lake.	
Social Trails (Under all alternatives social trails will be discouraged and eliminated where possible. Reference EA page 57.)			**X**
Leave social trails in place as they serve the purpose of concentrating impact vs. spreading impact over a wide area.	10,49	Where social trails are well established, are serving a purpose, and they are not causing impacts they will be left in place. There are some social and user-built trails that are no longer needed and do not serve a purpose.	
Signing (FS wilderness policy is to eliminate signing except at trail junctions and wilderness boundaries in Zones I-IV.)			**X**
Permit signing other than at trail junctions for resource purposes. For example existing sign "Livestock Meadow 1/4 mile."	10	This is not prohibited by new direction. It is currently allowed and will continue to be allowed. Signs labeling destinations, e.g." Rainbow Lake" are not allowed.	
Campfire Rings (In all zones will be discouraged and may be physically modified or removed if they occur.)			**X**
Permit established campfire rings in heavily used areas.	10	Campfire rings will be left in areas that clearly would have more damage by removing a fire ring. Situations are assessed on a case-by-case basis and monitored by wilderness rangers. Experience has shown that in most	

		cases removal decreases impacts.	
Stock Feed (In alternative D overnight stock users are required to pack feed.)			
Do not require overnight stock users to pack feed.	10	This is not required by the final decision..	
Resource Protection Facilities (FS preferred is to permit some under all action alternatives. Reference EA page 57.			**X**
Do not permit any facilities, reduce use instead.	17,19	The construction of any facility will be the exception, not the rule. Placement of facilities could include, a toilet at Johnson Lake where there are sanitation problems. Placing a hitch rail at some lakes for stock users will help reduce damage to soil and trees. Hitchracks also keep stock use concentrated rather than impacting a large area.	
Establishment of RNA's (Reference EA page 59 for FS preferred alternative.)			
Responses that were supportive of the preferred alternative.	9,10,34	Designation of these RNAs will provide for their long-term protection and recognition and to contribute to the national network of areas of important forest, shrubland, and grassland types, as well as other plant communities that have special or unique characteristics of scientific	**X**

		interest and importance. The decision is to proceed with establishing both RNAs.	
The Goat Flat and East Fork Bitterroot RNAs would be established. What does that mean?	40	The Forest Plans proposed two research natural areas, Goat Flat in the NW portion of the A-P and the East Fork along the East Fork of the Bitterroot River. This decision is to proceed with establishing both RNAs. The Goat Flat proposed RNA was selected to represent a unique alpine ecosystem and associated timberline forests. There are a number of sensitive plant species and rare plant communities within this RNA. The East Fork Bitterroot proposed RNA features a willow dominated valley bottom with beaver ponds in a subalpine fir forest type.	
What would this designation entail? Would they still be open for hiking, etc.?	52	See EA, Chapter III, pages 83-86, which describes the resources and uses occurring in the proposed RNAs. Hiking currently is occurring throughout portions of the RNAs and will continue once they are established.	
Need to clearly state why it is necessary to establish RNAs in the Wilderness and why they would not otherwise be protected within the Wilderness Plan.	17,19,43,51	RNAs have a special purpose which is somewhat different and a narrower focus than Wilderness. They represent major ecosystem types within a nation-wide network of RNA' established to maintain biological diversity, and conduct non-manipulative research and monitoring. In Wilderness they are protected by Wilderness designation. Although Wilderness direction takes precedent, there is a need for further recognition and protection for scientific study. Added constraints to protect special plant communities are part of this document. A portion of Goat Flat is outside the Wilderness, and so it is not protected by Wilderness designation.	
Would the possible road improvement of the Storm Lake	35	There should be no conflict as the boundary of the RNA is pulled back off the lake some distance. Activities on	

Road conflict with the proposed expansion of the Goat Flat RNA to include the south end of the lake?		and around the lake won't affect the RNA.	
Grazing Standards (Reference EA pages 44-46 for standards common to all action alternatives.)			**X**
Standards need to be set at a level that assures vegetation will be at or trending toward potential natural communities.	17	The general numerical grazing standards cited are consistent with Forest Plan direction. At a minimum they maintain existing riparian and wetland function. However, each Ranger District has the responsibility to identify specific problem areas. Where problem sites are identified, the plan empowers land managers to "apply a more restrictive standard to sites that are trending downward a lower than desirable ecological condition" (EA, Chapter II, pp.44-46).	
There is not enough detail on how these standards will be	32	See EA Chapter II, page 44, paragraph 2 under "Grazing Impacts from Recreational Use". The EA	

implemented and followed.		states that "Land managers will apply the appropriate type of standard and monitoring frequency according to site-specific need." The A-P EA mandates quantitative maximum allowable grazing impact limitations for two (forage utilization and stubble height) of the four accepted measurable parameters. Forage utilization and stubble height are measurements that are applied easily to most riparian zones suitable for grazing across the A-P without substantial site-specific inventory data. The remaining two parameters, streambank alteration and willow/aspen impacts, require a more detailed site-specific existing condition and trend analysis that has not been done yet for much of the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness. As districts develop more site-specific existing condition and trend data, they can apply standards for streambank alteration or willow/aspen stand health as warranted by need for the amount and rate of recovery. Likewise, each district has the option for prescribing "more restrictive forage utilization or stubble height standards...for sites that are trending downward or that are in less than a desirable ecological status" (EA, pp.44-45). Livestock forage areas within formal grazing allotments are covered by Allotment Management Plans. Sites reserved for permitted outfitters that use stock are governed by specific outfitter operating plans. The forthcoming Wilderness Operating Plan (EA, p. 9) may also provide more site-specific direction.	
How often will these standards	32	Chapter II, page 44 states that "Land managers will	

be monitored to ensure they are taking place?		apply the appropriate...monitoring frequency according to site-specific need." In practice, it is anticipated that wilderness rangers and trail crews will be trained to measure utilization and stubble height levels on key areas that lie outside livestock grazing allotments. On sites or in cases that require more experienced judgement, district rangeland specialists will be available to make impact level determinations. This aspect of implementation of the A-P Plan EA may be identified in more detail in the companion Wilderness Operating Plan. The frequency of monitoring is determined by known patterns and intensity of stock use. These levels of use vary dramatically between drainages and parts of drainages. Trail crews, wilderness rangers and rangeland management personnel generally are aware of sites that require regular seasonal inspections. It is the responsibility of the individual Ranger Districts to determine monitoring frequencies for livestock foraging areas within the A-P wilderness. A list of sites that are used regularly by recreational stock is included in Chapter II of the EA, p. 46.	
Why not place restrictions on seasonal use along functioning at risk areas right now, rather than waiting until there are significant impacts?	32	The forage utilization and stubble height standards quantified in the A-P plan are minimum standards designed to arrest any degradation of riparian or upland resources. This document will allow the establishment of more restrictive standards for all of the appropriate parameters to promote recovery of functioning-at-risk or non-functioning riparian zones or problem-prone upland sites (EA, pp. 44-45). The existing condition determinations (functioning/functioning-at-risk) for many stream systems within the A-P wilderness have	

		not been completed. The ecological condition of many upland livestock foraging sites outside of grazing allotments in the A-P also has not yet been determined. Additional site-specific grazing restrictions may be imposed at any time as this inventory data becomes available or as the individual Ranger Districts determine necessary. These refinements of grazing standards and grazing restrictions will be documented in either the forthcoming A-P Wilderness Operating Plan (EA, p. 9) or through specific actions by the district rangers.	
The draft EA does not deal with the ecological impacts of gazing by livestock, or its conflict with recreation use.	17,19	There is only one livestock allotment in the A-P. It is analyzed and monitored according to Forest Plan standards.	
Trails (Under all alternatives trail reconstruction will be allowed on existing trails, including relocation.)			**X**
Reconstruction and relocation of trails should be permitted only after public involvement and documentation in an EA.	17,19	Any trail construction/reconstruction other than maintenance type work (water bar installation, regrubbing, short relocations, etc.) still must follow the NEPA process as established under FSH 1909.15. This handbook established categories that are exempt from documentation in an EA or EIS unless extraordinary circumstances are identified. The process still requires	

		public scoping, cultural surveys, and biological assessments of wildlife, plant, and fisheries resources. No new trails will be constructed in trailless areas.	
Opposition to closing FS system trails.	10	We are not proposing to close system trails. Some trails have been closed in the past due to resource damage.	
Establish Management Zones (Reference EA pages 36-42).			**X**
Encourage the concept of management zones as a tool.	13,34,44	Management zones are based on the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) concept. It sets limits, in different portions of the Wilderness, based on measurements of conditions. The intent of establishing zones is to maintain or re-establish acceptable recource and social conditions. These conditions represent the maximum limit of change from natural which will be allowed. Zones allow mangers to apply a range of desired conditions which are specific and acceptable within the wilderness.	
Management zones - what is the definition of a management zone?	37,40	See above and also reference pages 36-42 of the EA.	
How will the four zones be enfourced? How will the high use area of Zone 4 be distinguished from Zone 1?	32	If desired conditions in given zones are not being met then managers have a variety of options depending on which condition(s) is not being attained. These options will be spelled out in the operating plan and involve such things as education, wilderness ranger coverage, further restrictions, or naturalization.	
Zones unduly restrict use by the public in the A-P Wilderness by being over-restrictive in classifying most of the A-P into Zone I rather than having more areas in Zones II, III, and IV.	49	Zones reflect current conditions in the A-P. Public response showed that the public likes the way the A-P is now and wants to maintain that condition.	

Management zones which sanction varying degrees of human disturbance appear to be incompatible with the language in Sections 2(a) and 2(c) of the referenced Wilderness Act.	51	Zones are not sanctioning human disturbance. They simply reflect that with human use there will inevitably be some disturbance. The Wilderneess Act does not eliminate human use.	
Will Zone IV, with its focused increased use, impact any populations of wildlife?	32	Zones reflect current conditions in the A-P. It is not anticipated that Zone IV will increase or focus use to an extent that wildlife will be displaced to any greater degree than it is currently by day use or camping.	
We are concerned that the area of influence along trail corridors is considered 200 feet either side, and all areas outside of trail corridors and lake shores are colored Zone I. Are there possible unforeseen problems for stock users outside the trail corridors?	9	Zones reflect current conditions. No problems are anticipated. If there are increased impacts due to stock use corrective actions will be taken at that time.	
Are management zones located on all perimeter sides of the Wilderness boundary?	40	Reference Map A for location of all management zones and the Map section in the EA starting on page 137.	

Miscellaneous Comments			
Outfitters and guides need to provide an accurate itinerary and be checked.	20	Outfitter/guide permits require outfitters to provide an accurate itinerary of proposed use along with camps and trails they plan to use and a record of their actual use each year. Wilderness rangers and other district staff try to check on the operations and camps of permitted outfitter each year.	
Need to address grazing allotment in Pintler Meadows.	32	There is only one livestock allotment in the A-P as stated in Chapter 3, p. 67. The permittee puts approximately 50 pairs in the meadow for 3-4 weeks. The season is alternated so that one year the cattle are in the meadow early in the season and the next year the cattle are in the meadow late in the season. We have a 55% utlization standard on the bluegrass dominated area in the upper end of the meadow and 50% on riparian vegetation. Standards are consistently met. It is analyzed and monitored according to Forest Plan standards.	
There was no discussion of cumulative impacts of the grazing allotment that exists in the Pintler Meadows area.	32	Issues involving the grazing of domestic cattle within the Pintler allotment will be fully addressed by the scheduled Allotment Management Plan (AMP) Revision EA in 2003. That EA will tier to and be consistent with the A-P Wilderness Plan. Domestic livestock grazing in the Wilderness is routinely analyzed and modified through the Allotment Plan revision NEPA process.	
Will Pintler Meadows allotment be modified at all by the proposed actions?	32	No. There is nothing in this decision that would change the way Pintler Meadows Allotment is managed.	

What is the current condition of Pintler Meadows allotment?	32	The AMP revision for the allotment is planned for 2003 and an analysis will be conducted at that time. Currently, 85% of Pintler Meadows and Pintler Creek within the AP on the allotment is in good to excellent condition--vegetation is dominated by willow, sedge and tufted hairgrass and the creek is in a functioning condition. The other 15% is bluegrass-dominated and is a lower seral expression for the potential habitat type. Trend here is stable or up.	
No discussion on the impacts on sensitive wildlife species	32	Proposed site specific activities will have biological assessments prepared in relation to their impacts on wildlife species. The project file has BAs on plants, fish and wildlife.	
Should use the definition from CFR 293.6a for mechanical transport.	37	CFR 293.6a is the accepted definition for mechanical transport. It states, "Mechanical transport shall include any contrivance which travels over ground, snow, or water on wheels, tracks, skids, or by floatation and is propelled by a nonliving power source contained or carried on or within the device."	
Limit stock travel from May 1 - July 15 either altogether or by designating certain trails.	39	Stock travel during this period is currently limited on the Philipsburg District where early season use causes some "unacceptable" damage. The conditions there are unique in that the high elevations are easily accessible early in the season. This can lead to muddy trail conditions and resource damage. A Wilderness-wide restriction was not pursued in the EA because there is not a need for it in other parts of the Wilderness.	
Should be no outfitter use on the CD Trail.	42	There are no permitted outfitters using only the Continental Divide Trail. There is limited use of the CD Trail by existing outfitters who travel portions of the trail to get to other destinations.	
There is no specific recognition in the EA of the Continental Divide	42	The Forests recognize this trail as a National Scenic Trail and have signed it as such. Maps and brochures	

Trail.		also recognize this designation.	
Drop the recreational guideline of "maintaining sport fisheries" as it is in conflict with the guideline of "restoring indigenous species".	43	Fisheries guidelines within the EA for comment have been removed from the document. This change was made to reflect that the statutory authority to stock and manage fisheries rests with the state and not the Forest Service. In its place, we have agreed with the state to establish an interagency working group to develop strategies to improve our native fish stocks, manage recreational impacts in Wilderness and deal with specific issues as they arise. See Appendix IV.	
Improving access facilities impact the Wilderness by increasing use. No reference in EA to access facilities.	40,52	This is outside the scope of the EA. New trailheads or improved access to A-P trailheads will be analyzed in an appropriate NEPA document.	
Ensure that monitoring takes place and that information gathered is evaluated.	27,32,34	Information will be gathered as described under "Monitoring Common to All Alternatives" in Chapter II of the EA (pages 43-47). Information will be used as needed in evaluating use and trends.	
The roadless public lands surrounding the wilderness should be closed to all on and off trail motorized use.	13	As described in Chapter II (page 16) this issue is already addressed in respective Forest Plans and Travel Plan updates and is beyond the scope of this assessment.	
Loop trails are not that common and should be retained.	10	There are no plans within the assessment to close any existing system trails. Trails have been closed in the past because of resource damage and may be considered in the future if no "reasonable" alternative is available.	
The environmental assessment fails to analyze what effect an expanded Wilderness Area would have on dispersion of recreational activities.	13	As identified in Chapter II (page 15) additions to the Anaconda-Pintler are addressed in current Forest Plans and are considered outside the scope of this analysis.	
Non traditional use was not defined.	45,52	Non traditional use is defined in Table II (EA, page 58).	

Has there been any ORV use within the A-P boundary? How has it been dealt with?	32	We have known occurrences of ORV, snowmobile, game carts, and mountain bike use within the A-P. Usually we find out after the fact. If we have a name or driver's license we follow up with law enforcement action. We keep the boundaries well signed, provide information at trailheads, and have wilderness rangers and trail crews in the field.	
What does the goal "maintain inherent disturbance regime for vegetation" mean?	43	It means the natural processes such as fire, insects, and blowdown will be allowed to function whenever possible.	
How can you have a guideline to "provide a range of opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation" when you have a goal (page 28) to "maintain opportunity for high quality primitive recreation"?	43	This guideline and goal are not mutually exclusive. The guideline is a broad statement describing a course of action and the goal describes an end result. This guideline can exist under the goal. See goal and guideline defintions on page 120 of the EA.	
Are the goals for fish management to maintain "indigenous" species or "native" species?	43	See Appendix IV for changes in in the goal statements as recommended by MFWP.	
Encounters (or solitude) is a very poor and indirect way to calculate damage caused by human impacts.	47	The damage caused by human impacts are measured under vegetation and soil guidelines, e.g. barren core area, campsite density.	
What constitutes naturalization and what is considered a large campsite?	52	A naturalized site is an area that is rehabilitated to its natural state, to the degree that is possible, removing all evidence of humans long term use. A "large site" is a somewhat relative term which differs from one area to another. In this context "site" refers to more than just the tent site itself. It includes the area used by a group including the cooking area, several tent sites, social trails to water, stock tying or grazing, etc.	