or suspected pure strains of West Slope Cutthroat or Bull trout exist. Stocking will follow
goals, objectives and guidelines in Chapter II, pages 31-33. Stocking would be considered
when either criteria listed in Table II, Chapter II, page 59 is met. When feasible stocking
should done using traditional means instead of helicopter or airplane. The two proposed
RNA's would be established. Guidelines for RNA's will include 1-7 on Table II, Chapter II,
page 59. A combination of education, detection, prevention, and eradication methods will
be used to prevent weed infestations before they occur. Existing inventoried noxious weeds
will continue to receive follow-up treatments. New infestations will be eradicated as soon
as possible after being inventoried. Weed monitoring will continue. Further analysis has
determined Mystic Lake cabin has historic importance and is eligible for listing under the
National Register of Historic Places. Thus, it will not be phased out by administrative
action and measures will be taken to protect and stabilize the cabin as described in
Chapter II, page 35.

**ACTIONS COMMON TO ALTERNATIVES B thru E**

All action alternatives propose to update Forest Plan direction. Each creates a zone system
and a prescription for each zone. Alternatives vary in the amount of each zone and in the
tactics used to achieve or maintain the desired conditions in each zone. Details of actions
by alternative are summarized in Table II, Chapter II pages 57-59.

All action alternatives, (B-E), will:

**Change Goals, Objectives, Guideline And Standards Of The Forest Plan**

The current A-P Plan is an appendix of the Forest Plans thus, a change in current direction
requires Forest Plan Amendment. The ID team reviewed the existing direction for the A-P as
contained in the A-P Wilderness Management Plan for 1977, and identified those portions
that needed to be changed or refined. Some parts of the 1977 Wilderness plan remain
pertinent and there is no need to update them. They will continue to provide direction for
the A-P. The goals and objectives listed below, and discussed in this document, are only
those where change is proposed. The following goals, objective, guidelines and standards
are changes that will apply Wilderness-wide.

**Recreation**

**Goals**

1. Maintain opportunity for high quality, primitive recreation.

2. Maintain opportunity for solitude.
3. Evidence of management will be the minimum necessary to achieve the Desired Future Condition.

Objectives

1. Minimize number of campsites and degree of impact on soil and vegetation in existing campsites. (See Table I, Chapter II, page 55 and the Zone Descriptions portion of this chapter, pages 36-42 for specific numbers of campsites permitted in each zone.)

2. Restore degraded areas to an acceptable level, as defined in the zones.

3. Have an active education program which emphasizes the importance of wild places and "Leave No Trace" ethics and practices.

Guidelines

1. Provide a range of opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

2. Maintain opportunity for solitude by eliminating most user built trails, naturalizing new campsites, and applying other measures as necessary to concentrate or disperse use.

3. Provide recreation options which include large trailless areas as well as maintained trails for stock users and hikers.

4. Limit and distribute use as necessary to protect wilderness.

Commercial Outfitters

Goals

1. Provide opportunities for outfitted service for recreation activities.

2. Outfitters and guides provide quality service in a manner compatible with use by other visitors.
3. Outfitter and guide services are conducted in a manner which maintains the wilderness resource.

4. Outfitter and Guides educate their clients on "Leave No Trace" skills and ethics, provide good examples of these practices, and interpret the natural and human history of the area.

Objectives

1. Outfitted use helps achieve proposed objectives, standards and guidelines associated with each zone.

2. Use allocation process, and evaluation criteria for similar operations, will be consistently applied by all Ranger Districts in the Anaconda-Pintler as described in the Guidelines.

Guidelines

1. New permits, or increased user days on existing permits, will not be issued unless there is a resource capacity to absorb the use without damage to wilderness values, an ability by the Forest Service to administer more permits, and a demonstrated public demand for additional outfitted A-P use.

2. If new permits are considered, the following five step process will be followed.

   a. Determination of demonstrated public need is completed and documented by the Forest Service. Determination of need examines: 1) Agency Mission, 2) Opportunities, 3) Land Capability, 4) Social Capacity, 5) Demand/Supply as further defined in the Guidebook on Outfitter and Guide Administration (February 1997).

   b. The issuance proposal is fully evaluated and the appropriate NEPA analysis/documentation has been completed.

   c. The analysis and decision are documented and linked to the Forest Plan.

   d. The prospectus process is followed for solicitation for applicants, evaluating competition and providing required documentation/information on applicants. This process is described in Forest Service Manual (FSM 2712.2)

      i. Applicant has proven financial capability and possesses adequate experience/expertise to operate a successful sustainable business.
ii. The most highly qualified applicant(s) has been selected via a formal documented applicant selection/use allocation process.

3. Each outfitter will be assigned an area in the operating plan.

4. Up to 100 incidental commercial/institutional use days will be allowed annually per district. These days are not intended for repeated use by the same outfitter nor are these days intended for existing outfitters. They are allotted on a one time basis.

Fish

The intention of this plan is to promote an integrated approach which minimizes the effects of fish stocking in the A-P with guidelines that move the wilderness towards more natural conditions. Over the years there have been various stocking strategy recommendations for given lakes and some attempts to outline overall strategy. This management framework outlines an approach that has been implemented in other Wilderness areas in Montana and will be conducted with full cooperation of Montana Fish, Wildlife and parks.

Goals

1. Work in close cooperation with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks to reestablish or maintain indigenous species.

2. Move towards native biological communities where possible.

3. Use an ecosystem approach in fisheries management which values the natural biological communities of the Anaconda-Pintler.

4. Contribute to the restoration of native strains of fish.
5. Provide fishing recreation where appropriate.

6. Protect native fish species.

Objectives

1. Fishless waters represent special esthetic, scientific, biological, and social values. Because of this the Forest Service prefers that these waters remain unstocked. See Table VI, Chapter III, page 89.

2. Stock only indigenous species in lakes that have been evaluated and determined appropriate by the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks and the Forest Service.

3. Stocking methods will be in keeping with wilderness values.

Guidelines

1. For those headwater lakes, which require periodic stocking to maintain a sport fishery, the following options will be considered:

   a. Allow the fish to naturally die out and maintain as a barren lake.

   b. In those headwater lakes where native species exist, continue to stock with native species.

   c. Where "a" or "b" do not apply, MFWP immediately switches to using native species in those waters where native populations presently exist downstream of stocked headwater lakes. Where native species brood stocks are unavailable, the stocking of non-natives be terminated until an appropriate brood stock is developed.

   d. Where native populations do not exist downstream of stocked headwater lakes switch, as soon as practical to using native species.

2. The Forest Service and the MFWP will cooperatively work together to implement management activities to reduce the threats to existing native populations within the drainage as a result of the past establishment of self-sustaining populations of non-native species.
3. The Forest Service and MFWP will cooperatively work together to modify fish stocking strategies in lakes that are receiving excessive damage (increase in social trails, barren core areas around campsites, number of campsites and number of new fire rings) from wilderness users.

4. In cooperation with MFWP aerial stocking of fish may be permitted for those waters in the wilderness where this was an established practice before wilderness designation if there is continued need or where other practical means are not available.

Vegetation

Goals

1. Maintain native vegetation, including natural composition, structure and function.

2. Protect rare and sensitive plants.

3. Eliminate, contain and prevent noxious weed infestations.


Guidelines

1. Follow the 1993 Anaconda Pintler Fire Management Guidelines.

2. Take actions necessary to prevent or restore recreation impacts on vegetation if they are in conflict with desired future condition. After further analysis, these actions might include such things as campfire prohibitions, camping closures, stock closures, restoration planting or limiting numbers of visitors.

3. Use a mix of methods to prevent and eliminate noxious weed infestations including the following:

   a. Eradicate or contain weeds in areas adjacent to the wilderness to prevent invasion from the perimeter. This includes treatment of trailheads and sides of approach roads, clear-cuts, and adjacent range allotments.

   b. Eradicate weeds within wilderness with a combination of hand pulling, biological and chemical methods as needed.
c. Enforce weed seed free feed regulation, CFR 261.50 (a), which requires that all feed in the Anaconda-Pintler be certified weed seed free or pelleted.

d. Encourage stock users to have animals on weed seed free feed for 48 hours prior to wilderness entry.

e. Have an active education program on weed spread prevention, weed recognition and the negative effects of weeds on ecological processes.

**Research Natural Areas**

Recommend establishment of the East Fork and Goat Flat proposed Research Natural Areas as shown in Maps II and III. Both of these RNA's were proposed in the original Bitterroot and Deerlodge National Forest Plans. The East Fork proposed RNA is wholly contained within the A-P Wilderness, and the boundary remains the same as proposed in the Forest Plan. The boundary of Goat Flat proposed RNA has been modified to include a larger representation of alpine and subalpine plant communities and endemic plant species. Goat Flat RNA is partially within the A-P Wilderness, (679 acres) and partially outside the Wilderness boundary. (697 acres).

**Goals**

1. Preserve and monitor RNA's as representative ecosystem types and for their special vegetative associations and sensitive species. These special elements are noted in the establishment record and existing conditions section of this document.

**Objectives**

1. No increase in number of campsites or their degree of impact within the East Fork RNA. No campsites in Goat Flat RNA.

**Guidelines**

1. Naturalize any new campsites which appear.

2. Do not stage crews for firefighting or use area for repeated helicopter landings.
3. Avoid group camps for administrative purposes, including spike or base camps for fire fighting, trail construction, contract work, or other camps for field work;

4. Do not permit outfitter camps or other camps under special use permit.

5. Pay special attention to sensitive species and associations if any trail relocation or reconstruction is necessary.

6. No new range allotments or new water diversions are permitted.

7. Eliminate noxious weeds in accordance with guidelines discussed Table II, Chapter II, page 59. Other exotic species will also be eliminated if it is determined that they are displacing native vegetation.

**Mystic Lake Cabin**

**Goals**

1. Preserve Mystic Lake Cabin for its cultural significance as part of the historic component of the wilderness resource.

**Objectives**

1. Maintain and protect Mystic Lake Cabin from deterioration in a manner that allows for its continued, occasional, administrative use.

**Guidelines**

1. Individual preventative fuels management will be employed in the vicinity of the cabin for the purpose defending the cabin in the event of a wildfire or prescribed natural fire. Efforts to save the cabin will be taken if a fire threatens. These measures could include a variety of suppression tactics but would not include extensive cutting of vegetation.

**Standards**

1. Maintenance and rehabilitation of the cabin will not use mechanized tools and will be done in a fashion that meets the standards of management for a historic structure eligible for listing under the National Register of Historic Places.
Establish Management Zones

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 resource and social conditions. These conditions represent the maximum limit of change from natural which will be allowed. Zones allow managers to apply a range of desired conditions which are specific and acceptable within wilderness. Zones are based on the premise that the Wilderness is not homogeneous. Some areas will have more human activity and thus show more bio-physical and social impacts than do areas with fewer people and their associated activities. Conditions, as described in narratives and as measured by indicators, vary from one zone to the next. Management actions appropriate to each zone are identified and procedures for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of management actions are established.

Alternatives and zones are related. Maps IV through VII show this relationship. Zone direction does not vary by alternative. Location and amount of each zone does vary by alternative. Various actions which differ by alternative need to be taken to maintain zone conditions. See Table II, Chapter II page 57.

For example, minimizing campsite impacts is a goal in all alternatives but the degree to which this will be applied varies by zone and alternative. The way results will be attained varies too. Campsite impacts can be influenced by many actions, from education to various restrictions such as: bans on campfires or camping, hardening or designating campsites, reducing group size, eliminating stock use in some areas, a permit system which limits over all use, etc.

In all action alternatives, the A-P will be primarily Zone I. Thus, in direction common to all action alternatives, the A-P will have a high degree of apparent naturalness, ecological processes will operate with no perceptible evidence of human impact or use, there will be outstanding opportunities for solitude and recreation will be characterized as primitive, unconfined, and challenging. The area will function as a wild place. It will look and feel wild to those who visit.

Relationship Between Human Influence and Zone Delineation

Lakes

The effects of recreation on the area around lakes may create a different zone in areas adjacent to the lakes. The area affected by recreation around lakes may include frequent human presence during use season, campsites which persist from one season to the next, user trails around lakes, tree damage from recreation use, etc. The area which is affected varies by a lake’s proximity to a trail, the nature of the lakeshore, and use patterns.

Some lakes display very little evidence of use and the surrounding area does not differ from the adjacent Zone I. At other lakes some influence and impact is apparent within approximately a 500’ radius of the lake. More heavily used lakes may have some influence
and impacts apparent within 1/4 mile radius. The influence of use areas is displayed in Table IV, Chapter II, page 63.

♦ Trails

Trail corridors inevitably display some influence from human activity, (sight, sound, or biophysical effect), for a distance of approximately 200' each side of the trail. Table IV, Chapter II, page 63, reflects zone changes by Alternative.

♦ Other Areas, as shown in Table IV, Chapter II, page 63, are simply use areas which are generally recognized. They are bounded by natural use patterns which are primarily defined by the surrounding geography, such as steep slopes, rock, or dense vegetation. The area is influenced, to some degree, approximately 1/2 mi. from its center.

Description of Management Zones

♦ Zone I (Most Natural) - exists in essentially trailless areas where use and impacts are not focused by destinations. This area has the lowest level of human disturbance. It is characterized by a virtually unmodified natural environment. The A-P is primarily Zone I.

Goals

1. This zone has the highest degree of apparent naturalness.

2. Ecological processes operate naturally, with essentially no perceptible or measurable evidence of human impact or use.

3. The area has outstanding opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation which requires self-reliance.

4. The area functions as a wild place. It looks and feels wild to those who visit.

Objectives

1. Campsite vegetation impacts recover annually.

2. Trails frequently used by humans seldom occur in this area.
3. Encounters with other groups and rangers are rare.

Standards

Eliminate or prevent the following in this zone:

1. System Trails

2. Signing

Guidelines

Through education and administrative actions, which may sometimes include physical removal, the following will be discouraged or eliminated:

1. Base Camps for fire suppression or other administrative purposes

2. Constructed Helispots; allow old sites to recover

3. Rock Campfire Rings

4. Barren Core Area associated with campsites

5. Campsite density greater than 1 per roving, radial, mile

6. Structures (except Heritage Resource)

7. Frequent Managerial Presence

8. Repeated use of Large Group Camps, including outfitter

Zone II: composed primarily of some access routes and the high elevation lake areas found on the Philipsburg and NW Wise River District. It is close to the crest of the range and contains more destinations than any other portion of the wilderness. The
destinations include lakes, peaks, and high passes. Access in this zone is via secondary trails. Destination areas have moderate use and are relatively vulnerable.

Goals

1. This zone has a high degree of wilderness integrity and a low level of human disturbance.

2. The zone is characterized by a predominantly unmodified natural environment.

3. Ecological processes operate naturally with limited evidence of human impact.

4. Excellent opportunities exist for solitude and the area offers a primitive and unconfined type of recreation, requiring self-reliance

Objectives

1. Campsite impacts are minimal.

2. User built trails and social trails are minimized.

3. Encounters with other groups and rangers are uncommon.

Standards

1. Secondary trails are the highest standard trail in this area.

Guidelines

Through education and administrative actions, which may sometimes include physical removal, the following will be discouraged or eliminated:

1. Signing except at trail junctions and wilderness boundaries

2. Frequent Managerial Presence
3. Base Camps for fire suppression or other administrative purposes

4. Outfitter Base Camps

5. Rock Campfire Rings

6. Barren Core Area over 100 sq. ft.

7. Campsite density greater than 3 per roving, radial, mile

8. Structures. (except Heritage Resource, and trail structures for resource protection, e.g. waterbars.)

Zone III- includes some popular destinations and more heavily used areas that are along popular routes used for overnight trips. The area is characterized by a predominantly unmodified natural environment. However, some sites are substantially affected by human activity. Such impacts include loss of vegetation and soil along travel routes, at campsites and at scenic attractions such as lakeshores and viewpoints. The area has both mainline and secondary system trails. Encounters with other groups and rangers on the trail or in campsites are expected. Campfire rings will exist only in heavily used sites where determination has been made that less damage occurs by concentrating use than by dispersing it. Impacts could persist from year to year but do not exceed defined objectives shown in Table I, Chapter II, page 55.

Goals

1. The zone has a high degree of wilderness integrity.

2. The zone is characterized by a minimal level of human disturbance.

3. Ecological processes operate naturally with limited evidence of human impact.

4. Opportunities for solitude are available.

5. A primitive and unconfined type of recreation, requiring self-reliance, is characteristic of the area.

Objectives
Objectives

1. User-built trails and social trails are minimized.

2. Conditions that precipitate user conflicts are minimal.

Guidelines

The following will be discouraged through education and may be physically modified or removed if they occur:

1. Rock Campfire Rings

2. Barren Core Area over 200 sq. ft.

3. Campsite density greater than 6 per roving, radial, mile

4. Signing, except at trail junctions and wilderness boundaries.

5. Structures, (except Heritage Resource, and trail structures for resource protection or safety, e.g. waterbars or other resource protection structures, such as hitching rails or toilets).

**Zone IV (Transition/Portal)** receives the most use within the Wilderness and the highest percentage day use. It has the most human disturbance of any zone within the Wilderness. Despite this disturbance it is still characterized by a high degree of wilderness integrity and by a predominantly unmodified natural environment. However, some sites are substantially affected by human activity. Such impacts include loss of vegetation and soil along travel routes, campsites and scenic attractions. Ecological processes still operate naturally with little evidence of human impact. Activity levels are such that some wildlife is displaced. Opportunities for solitude are available but less characteristic of this area. A primitive and unconfined type of recreation, requiring self-reliance, is characteristic of the area. Risk and challenge are somewhat less than in more remote areas of the wilderness. The area has both mainline and secondary system trails. User-built trails and social trails are minimized. Encounters with other groups and rangers on the trail or in campsites are expected. Conditions that precipitate user conflicts are minimal. Rock campfire rings will exist only in heavily used sites where determination has been made that less damage occurs by concentrating use than by dispersing it. Impacts could persist from year to year but do not exceed defined objectives shown in Table I, Chapter II page 55. Visitor use may be regulated to protect the environment and visitor experiences.
Goals

1. Maintain as much as possible a high degree of wilderness integrity.

2. Minimize the level of human disturbance.

3. Ecological processes operate naturally with little evidence of human impact.

4. Opportunities for solitude are available but mostly during off season.

5. A primitive and unconfined type of recreation requiring self reliance is characteristic of the area.

Objective

1. Minimize user-built and social trails.

2. Conditions that precipitate user conflicts are minimal.

Guidelines

The following will be discouraged through education and may be physically modified or removed if they occur:

1. Rock Campfire Rings

2. Barren Core Area over 500 sq. ft.

3. Campsite density greater than 8 per roving, radial, mile

4. Structures, (except Heritage Resource, and trail associated for resource protection, e.g. waterbars or other resource protection structures, such as hitching rails or toilets.)

Require a self-issuing (Alt. B-D) or agency issued (Alt.E) permit
Self-issuing entry permits in Alt. E-D would be required for both day and overnight use. Permits would be free and available at trailheads. They would not regulate use. Although mandatory, spontaneity and convenience would be maintained.

A self-issuing permit is an inexpensive and accurate way to assess wilderness use. With current funding and staffing there is no way to obtain accurate information on numbers of users, length of stay, destinations, or type of visitors, i.e. (day, overnight, hikers, stock users, local, out of state, etc.). Many facets of management could be improved with a better information gathering tool. This method provides more useful data than trail counters, trailhead counts or sporadic backcountry encounter data.

Self-issuing permits provide an education opportunity, albeit a limited one, and help law enforcement in several ways. The system acts as a deterrent since people know their names are available to agency personnel at the trailhead. Rules and regulations on the tear off portion of the permit notify people and provide a handy reference for regulations and rationale. Law enforcement officials no longer need to be hesitant to enforce regulations because people "didn't know."

**MONITORING COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES**

**Conditions By Zone**

Under any action alternative, monitoring which gauges whether the goals, objectives, standards and guidelines are being attained will be necessary. Site conditions will be assessed in a variety of ways. Recreation impacts and administrative actions (which have specific indicators as shown in Table I of Chapter II, page 55,) will be monitored. These include such things as campsite density, barren core area, number of social trails, encounters, administrative or permitted camps, noxious weeds, and vegetation impacts that result from recreation use. Impacts include firewood utilization, forage utilization and vegetation disturbance or elimination around campsites

In addition to monitoring tied to specific indicators in the table, other monitoring also helps gauge the health of the resource. An Air Quality Related Values plan exists to monitor air quality. Other areas of concern are considered below.

**Natural Fire Occurrence**

The goal of wilderness fire management is that fire play as natural a role as possible within the Wilderness displaying a frequency and severity similar to historic range of variability. Frequency and severity are both monitored as part of the 1993 Fire Management Guidelines (FMG), for the Anaconda-Pintler. The number of natural starts is compared with the number of fires which are allowed to follow their natural course without suppression. The monitoring plan in the FMG is adequate and will not be changed by this EA.