From: Kelly Smith
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: Chattooga River Project Comments
Date: 07/29/2008 10:12 AM

U.S. Forest Service
Chattooga River Project
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212.

RE: Chattooga River Project Comments

Dear Sumter National Forest,

I am a faculty member here at Clemson, where I am a fellow of the Rutland Institute for Ethics and regularly teach environmental ethics. Thus I know the complexities of attempting to balance the different competing sides of environmental issues. I have just recently gotten into the amazing sport of whitewater kayaking, however, and I find the continued ban on boating in the Chattooga extremely one sided. In particular, while I understand the need to limit the use of the river and the resulting environmental impact, I think there is an enormous difference between the impact of non –commercial boaters, whose numbers are limited anyway and who tend to be much more aware of their impact on the environment, and commercial boating which emphasizes getting as many people on the river as possible, very few of whom have any familiarity with river issues. Perhaps I am being too sanguine and the impact of even non-commercial boaters would be extremely adverse. I think the boating community as a whole would be supportive of a boating ban if there was truly good evidence of the adverse impact of lifting it. However, this would require a careful user capacity analysis, which as I understand has still not been done. Given that, I am frankly mystified as to the basis of the Forest Service's decision here. I plan to make this situation a test case for my environmental ethics students in the future and so far it certainly does not reflect well on the way the Forest Service sets public use policies.

Thank you for your time,

Kelly Smith

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"Nothing in this world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity" - MLK
"The point of philosophy is to start with something so simple as not to seem worth stating, and end with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it." - Bertrand Russell
"If triangles had a god, he'd have three sides."Hebrew proverb
"What gets us into trouble is not what we don't know, but what we know for sure that just ain't so." - Twain
"A great many people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices." - James

"If a woman has to choose between catching a fly ball and saving an infant's life, she will choose to save the infant's life without even considering if there are men on base." - Dave Barry