From: Antonia Chadwick
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: Environmental Assessment - Chattooga River
Date: 07/24/2008 01:21 AM

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

comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
24 July 2008

RE: Chattooga River Project Comments

Dear Sir,

I am presently living in Pennsylvania, but I have lived in Georgia, and spent many weekends in the Sumter National Forest. I have been a whitewater paddler for 3 decades, and have travelled to Georgia/South Carolina just for the opportunity to paddle rivers in the region.

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment regarding the recreational management of the Chattooga River. I disagree with your analysis and your proposal. Both treat me and other paddlers unfairly. Your proposal would not meet my interests.

*There is no justification for banning boating on the Chattooga river. Boaters typically leave a very small "footprint", rarely leaving the boat or the larger rocks on the shore.

* The USFS has spent years searching for a reason to limit paddling on the Chattooga and has found none.
* None of the listed alternatives is acceptable because all include boating bans on the upper Chattooga Cliffs reach and on tributaries – without any justification.
* The USFS preferred alternative is not equitable and not acceptable!
* The EA offers no basis for the boating bans and limits
* The EA is different than the last one, is at least a year late and has wasted millions in tax payer money
* The USFS hired qualified consultants and then ignored their input.
* The public should have the right to float on public Wild and Scenic Rivers regardless of who owns the land along the river.
* An irrational decision like this sets a poor precedent for future decisions on utilization of natural resources elsewhere in the country.

In short:
1. Conduct a real user capacity analysis and immediately allow boating in the same numbers, places, and seasons that you allow existing users.
2. Allow paddling in a similar manner to your alternative number 8, except on the entire Upper Chattooga River and its tributaries.

Thank you,
Sincerely

Jeffrey Sarsfield
479 Briar Lane
Chambersburg, Pa