From:	Julia Franks
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Treat all Chatooga users the same!
Date:	08/18/2008 09:16 AM

Dear Sumpter National Forest:

I don't think any of the proposed alternatives are a good solution, and I would argue that the NationaL Forest Service needs to revise the alternatives proposed in order to achieve a solution that is acceptable to more users.

I think the alternatives need to be re-worked for the following reasons:

- Using "Mean Daily Flow" to determine whether boating is allowed or not is not a realistic solution. If flow rates are to be used- a better solution needs to be proposed. It is not clear how or when the "prediction" for the MDF would be posted or how this would be communicated to the boating community. Daylight hours dictate when boaters will start their trips- especially from Dec-March. It seems more logical to base the minimum flow on a level reading from that morning. The MDF seems prone to error and subjective interpretation in advance of hard data that would be a known quantity the morning of a potential "boating day". Assuming level flows must be a requirement (which I disagree with), there must be a better way. .
- The EA lists 4000+ LWD sites on the Chattooga. Of these, only a handful resulted in portages on the upper section due to LWD during the boater study. . A sensible policy is needed to remove LWD when it seriously endangers safety of boaters and others and/or the impact of LWD removal is less than additional trail portages. If hiking trails are cleared of fallen trees, then why not water trails where needed??
- Combining MDF's with a permit system that limits boater use and introduces the future possibility of an internet based permit system will create bureaucracy that will make it extremely difficult for anyone to plan a paddling on the rare days that it is possible to paddle.
- Unlike other river users, minimum flow requirements and boater skill level will naturally regulate the number of boaters who choose to paddle the more difficult back country sections of river. Therefore, MDF, limits and # of users/day and permitted months to boat should not be requirements of the solution.
- The EA data supports that the best boating days and the best fishing days will seldom coincide. This fundamental realization should guide alternatives that provide more access to boaters.
- If Nicholson Fields are prime fishing areas, then don't allow put-in access at Lick Log. It is likely that the summer recreational users will cause the highest negative impact. Don't include tubers with coolers in the same category as hard deck boaters. We're not proud of them either.
- Fishing DOES negatively impact my boating experience. Beer cans and other garbabe may be left by "other" users, but tangles of fishing line, hooks, and used bait containers and abandoned trot lines belong specifically to one user group. . The EA points to specific impacts from boaters, but I don't see any mention of specific problems related to fishing.

Thank You for considering these comments.

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