From: kumarskeeper
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: Upper Chattooga
Date: 08/18/2008 08:24 AM

U.S. Forest Service

Chattooga River Project

4931 Broad River Road

Columbia, SC 29212.

comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

August 18, 2008

RE: Chattooga River Project Comments

Dear Sumter National Forest,

I am a novice paddler living in Marietta, Ga. I am interested in this cause because I have a great affinity for the Chattooga River. I learned to paddle on this river, and I fell in love with its beauty. I am not experienced enough to take on the challenge of the Upper sections, but I feel that the beauty of this river should be shared by ALL, not just a select few. The fact is, paddlers leave less of an impact than any other sport, and access MUST be granted to any and all who desire to view the river in any form they so choose.

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 my community of river enthusiasts unfairly and your proposal would not meet my interests. Please consider the following concerns I have regarding this issue:

- The USFS has spent thirteen years searching for a reason to limit paddling on the Chattooga and has found *none*. **It is time to open the river to boating.**
- The EA is not a user capacity analysis and does not reference one. The AW appeal decision required a user capacity analysis. Where is it?
- The EA and preferred alternative are not equitable or protective of the river because they considers boating to be the only management variable, while other larger more impactful uses are not seriously considered for limits.
- The EA offers no basis for the boating bans and limits
- The USFS hired qualified consultants and then ignored their input
- Paddlers prefer an alternative similar to Alternative 8 that 1) fully allows boating on the entire Chattooga River below Grimshawes Bridge, 2) allows paddling on tributaries, 3) includes encounter standards based on a real user capacity analysis, 4) will *equitably* limit *total* use only when encounter standards are consistently exceeded, and 5) will do so using all available indirect measures first.
- **The public should have the right to float on public Wild and Scenic Rivers regardless of who owns the land along the river.**
- All aspects of the "Outstanding Remarkable Values" of Wild and Scenic Rivers should be protected on the entire river, not just in some areas.

Thank you for considering these comments. Please consider conducting a real user capacity analysis and immediately allowing boating in the same numbers, places, and seasons that you allow existing users. Paddling should be allowed in a similar manner to your alternative number 8, except on the *entire* Upper Chattooga River and its tributaries.

Thank you for considering these comments,

Sincerely

Memré Savant

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I would rather be a beggar and single than a queen and married.
To the Ambassador of the Duke of Wurtemberg, 1564.
Chamberlin, The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth (1923), ch. 2.