From:	Robert H. Lee
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Upper Chattooga Public Comments
Date:	08/18/2008 01:56 PM

I am a paddler, hunter and fly fisherman and I strongly disagree with the current proposal for the regulated use of the Upper Chattooga. It appears to be biased against people who use the water directly for recreation -boaters. Kayakers, canoeists and the like have every right to the responsible use of the waterway as hunters and fishers do. It is a 'waters of the United States' as well as a 'Wild and Scenic' river. It is public domain from the headwaters to the sea up to the ordinary high water line. We have a right to it. To agree to such and inequitable exclusionary management strategy will be setting a very dangerous watershed management precedent that could have ramifications and consequence nationally.

We paddlers would 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.

We are an ecologically and environmentally conscious cohort, our sport depends on that. We should be valued as such. We are advocates for good land stewardship practices. We should be consulted and welcomed, not ignored and banned!!