From:	John Kriener
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Subject:	Chattooga River Project Comments
Date:	08/18/2008 11:04 PM

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

Dear Sir,

I have read the Environmental Assessment (EA) of the recreational management of the Chattooga Wilderness area. As an individual who has flyfished, paddled, camped and hiked in and around the Chattooga, including portions of the Wilderness area, I strongly believe that the proposal unjustifiably discriminates against one activity in favor of another, but also does not go far enough to protect the wilderness area.

I support justifiable restrictions on user groups in order to protect the wilderness and the wilderness experience as long as the restrictions are fair and equitable.

No user capacity analysis is described or referenced in the EA. Restrictions and bans on boating proposed in the EA serve only to preserve the status quo.

It stretches credulity to think that a canoe or kayak passing over the surface of a stream has a greater impact than a fisherman wading on the bottom of the same stream or walking/crawling along its banks does. Boaters did not make the user trails, campsites and trash currently present in the Wilderness area.

The Forest Service's recommended management plan, Alternative #4, should be replaced by a modified Alternative #8. A modified Alternative #8 treats all environmentally friendly user groups equally and complies with the Wilderness Act and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Adjustments to Alternative #8 should include:

>> Allow unrestricted boating on the entire Chattooga River and its tributaries below Grimshawes Bridge.

>> Use a permit, or similar quantifiable tracking system, as the backbone for the "adaptive management approach."

>> Include encounter standards based on a real user capacity study.

>> If the encounter standards are consistently exceeded use indirect measures to limit encounters before reverting to bans or restrictions.

>> Ban the introduction and replenishment of non-native species or plant life in the wilderness areas.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment.

John Kriener
Elon, NC