From: guitarbender88@aol.com
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: The Chattooga boating ban
Date: 07/20/2008 11:23 AM

U.S. Forest Service

Chattooga River Project

4931 Broad River Road

Columbia, SC 29212.

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

July 20, 2008

RE: Chattooga River Project Comments

Dear Sumter National Forest,

My name is Will Brezinski I am an18 year old registered voter and was recently awarded my Eagle Scout. Through my time in the Boy Scouts, I learned many things and acquired new hobbies; the most significant of theses being whitewater kayaking. Kayaking is an incredibly healthy activity, and it keeps me occupied and away from other, dangerous activities people my age are prone to participate in. I feel that the proposed limitation of whitewater boaters is a grave injustice. Our sport has the lowest environmental impact of any river sport, yet we are singled out to be denied access to this beautiful river. Though I do not live near the Chattooga, I am well acquainted with the idea that, “An injustice anywhere leads to injustice everywhere”. The proposal which is now before you is, in effect, an act of segregation. I hope that you can see the logic and reason behind what I say.

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 proposed alternative will negatively impact protections granted under the Wilderness Act and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act on the Chattooga and other rivers nationwide.
- 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.
- No alternative is acceptable because they all include boating bans on the upper Chattooga Cliffs reach and on tributaries – without any justification.
- 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 USFS preferred alternative includes a total ban on 2/3 of the upper river, a ban on tributary boating, and allows only 0-6 days of limited boating on the remaining reach – while allowing all other wilderness conforming existing uses in unlimited numbers.. This is not equitable and not acceptable!

- The EA offers no basis for the boating bans and limits
- The EA lacks a full range of alternatives
- The EA is no better or 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 450 CFS average daily flow trigger in the preferred alternative is a flawed measure that should be eliminated from any considerations. There is no way a paddler can know this number and will be an administrative burden for the agency.
- Paddlers prefer an alternative similar to Alternative 8 that 1) fully allows boating on the entire Chattooga Rive r 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,

Will Brezinski

P.O. Box 667

Athens, WV 24712

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