

To whom it may concern,

I still haven't changed my mind on the floating of the upper Chattooga. The main reason is safety concerns.

I'm an active member of the rural fire and rescue departments in Mountain Rest, South Carolina. This area of discussion is one of the most remote areas in our state and is very difficult to extract persons injured while hiking/backpacking along the trails that are away from the water's edge. Now, boaters injured in the river will be even more difficult to extract, because of the lack of access to the patient due to the raging water or the steepness of the terrain from the access trails down to the river. At least, if the patient is injured on a trail system, he or she can be wheeled or carried out using the trails. High angle rescue systems may become more in play with river rescues. Another reason I'm not for this floating is more people will flock to these areas causing more damage to the resource. Boaters will use this area in high flow situations which means very wet conditions from rain fall. Think about it for a minute.

If, a pasture or dirt roadway without gravel isn't traveled when sopping wet from rain fall, there's very little damage, if any at all to the pasture or roadway. Now, drive through a pasture or dirt road when wet, ruts will form and erosion will start and become more of a problem. The boaters will get out of their boats to take pictures, use the bathroom, taking breaks, scout the river, and etc. All of this while the forest is soaking wet. Also, more people equals more litter.

Thanks, have a great day!

Truman Nicholson