



Don Benton
<t.doc@cox.net>

09/12/2007 01:19 PM
Please respond to t.doc

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Boating vs status quo Chattooga River

Dear John Cleeves, My desire would be to keep the Chattooga closed to boating above the Highway 28 bridge. The additional traffic and use would hasten the deterioration of this wild and scenic area. I believe the impact would irreversibly undermine the already fragile fishing, hiking, and birding opportunities that are presently available. I appreciate the chance to comment on this topic. Thanks --

Donald B. Benton, Jr. DMD
4128 Arkwright Rd. Ste. B
Macon, GA 31210-1707
478.475.1980 Voice
478.475.5654 Fax
478.960.0287 Mobile



"Mark Buckley"
<mbuckley@enviroincentives.com>

09/12/2007 01:21 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc: <jcleeves@fs.fed.us>
Subject: upper Chattooga River comments

Please find my comments on the upper Chattooga River management decisions attached. Thank you.

[Mark Buckley, Ph.D](#)
[Environmental Economist](#)
[Environmental Incentives](#)
[831.239.4060](#)
mbuckley@enviroincentives.com



Buckley upper Chattooga comments.pdf

MARK BUCKLEY, PH.D.
mbuckley@ucsc.edu
mbuckley@enviroincentives.com

949 MODESTO AVE. UNIT A
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, CA 96150
CELL: 831.239.4060
FAX: 603.590.2980

September 11, 2007

To Jerome Thomas, Forest Supervisor:

Please consider my comments below regarding the upper Chattooga River. I have been involved with similar projects across the country in roles as a researcher and consultant. My Ph.D. is in economics and environmental policy, I have peer-reviewed publications on the problem of managing river resources for multiple users (*Environmental Management, Conservation Biology, Restoring Natural Capital, etc.*), and I have given invited presentations on this general problem. I am also personally very familiar with the Chattooga watershed, having raft-guided on the river throughout my undergraduate years, volunteering for the Chattooga Watershed Coalition during those times for vegetation surveys, backpacking throughout the headwaters, and kayaking all legal sections countless times. I am currently leading the development of a basin-wide water quality management and trading program for Lake Tahoe, but I return to the east frequently and visit the Chattooga River as much as possible.

The primary concern for matters such as these is to identify the most beneficial uses from several perspectives and how to organize any rival aspects for maximum benefit for a given level of equity and resource constraints. In other words, how can we satisfy the various demands on the resource in a way that is as fair as possible and promotes the outstanding natural characteristics?

The starting point for bargaining scenarios such as these is to establish a baseline of use and right. Unfortunately, parties will typically choose baselines of use that differ depending on their goals, leading to difficulty in identifying fair compromises. For example in this case, fishermen are likely to bargain from a baseline of current usage involving no kayaking, while kayakers are more likely to bargain from a clean-slate of no preferential usage. Therefore, to resolve this inconsistency, we should look to the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) as designated under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which as you identify are geology, biology, scenery, recreation, and history.

I have therefore built an impact matrix for each of these, recognizing that recreation is not defined as any particular recreation, but simply the ability for people to use the resources for personal enjoyment. I rank the various options subjectively based on my expert opinion regarding the degree to which the particular ORV is supported as interpreted by the designated standards associated and my knowledge of tradeoffs and behaviors resulting from the various sets of rules (Impact Figure below).

None of the options involve any form of modification to the banks or streambed involving geologic modification. Therefore, there is no detrimental effect for this ORV. If the nature of boating in some way harmed rock surfaces as sport climbing can at times this would be an issue, but in this case it is not.

Biological effects do have room for variation. Woody debris removal is the most obvious, particularly given its important role for maintaining aquatic ecosystems and natural channel meander. Trail creation does this as well. A secondary concern is direct impacts on vegetation associated with recreational usage. I feel extremely comfortable based on years of travel from the headwaters down to Lake Tugaloo that the level of user-created trails is directly proportional to fishing use. Fishermen seek to access the river from unique points from shore. Consequently, there

	Geology	Biology	Scenery	Recreation	History	Total
1-Current Management	10	7	4	5	5	31
2-Encounter Minimization	10	7	5	5	5	32
3-Biophysical Impacts	10	7	7	5	7	36
4-Limited Boating	10	6	8	8	7	39
5-Registered Boating	10	6	8	9	6	39
6-Unregistered Boating	10	6	9	10	6	41

Impact Matrix. 10= most supporting of the ORV, 1=least supporting of the ORV

are new trails visible along the bank throughout the upper reaches where heavy fishing occurs. Such trails are much less common on lower reaches of the river. Boaters do get out of their boats for scouting and resting but this is typically done immediately in the river channel, and do not frequently cut up to more major trails.

Fishing, on the other hand, has direct and obvious effects on biology through direct harm to fish species and potential disease transmission. Horseback-riding similarly has a heavy impact on trails causing increased disturbance leading to heightened erosion and animal waste deposition. Hiking causes more erosion than boating as well. Therefore, it is arguable that biological benefits would be promoted by reducing fishing and horseback-riding rather than boating.

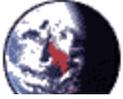
Scenery is negatively impacted by biological impacts and encounters with others. But access is necessary to obtain scenic benefits by definition. Much of the river is only accessible by boat. Therefore, heightened boat access increases the scenic benefits of the area. As mentioned above, boating causes lower biological impacts than the other uses, consequently providing a scenic benefit with less scenic degradation.

If recreation is number of user-days and quality of user-days, the lowest-impact user-days should be encouraged. With boating as the lowest-impact use, it becomes the driver of the highest quality recreation. History is a function of maintaining historic amenities and allowing access to enjoy them. Therefore it parallels recreation in that the most low-impact use is appropriate. Historic benefits do not necessarily require high usage, so slightly limited access might be more conducive to preserving historic amenities.

Following from a subjective but informed and experienced assessment, it follows as shown in the impact matrix that I believe the highest preference should be placed on Option 6, equal preference between 4 and 5, and least preference for existing and highly limited options 3-1. Given the importance of low-impact usage, it does seem that kayaking is a highly beneficial use. I do agree though that woody debris should not be removed for biological reasons. My ideal option would involve boating access for recreation benefits, and for biological benefits: no parking or new trails in the corridor, no woody debris removal, and limits on fishing use.

Respectfully,

Mark Buckley, Ph.D.



"Midge McVey"
<mcvey01@alltel.net>
09/12/2007 01:30 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: North Fork of the Chatooga

To John Cleeves Project manager:

I have looked over the six alternatives given, and would like to comment on them individually and collectively.

Alt. #1: I believe this alternative would be good if there were provisions for enforcing the present laws.

Under group size I do not like the ability for commercial groups to be in the area Organized groups such as boy scouts church and civic groups and clubs I support. I do not support the removal of any woody debris other than that which jeopardizes bridges and culverts. Removal of LWD for recreation is not in keeping with the "wild" aspect of this river.

Alt.#2: I have mentioned before and will again that limited access numbers per day is my preferred option I believe the best way to achieve that is through a permit system. It does not have to include a fee but I believe a permit or permit number should have to be obtained. I believe that this would help law enforcement in the area, along with giving the USFS a better data collection opportunity. Permit systems work in other places to limit the number of visitors per day. Parking is of no consequence to me personally I would love it if everyone had to hike to get to the river but I believe that removing existing parking would cause problems for the disabled and the ADA which is another can of worms. Perhaps disabled parking only. Enforcement once again becomes an issue.

Alt#3: I feel that an unlimited number of groups with a group size of 12 would make a pretty large footprint A better defined number of total persons would be better, I.e: max 3 groups of twelve per day not to exceed total #of 50 persons on the corridor, again permitting and reservation system.

Alt#4: There are a couple of concerns I would like to bring up in this alternative. I believe that a defined minimum flow should be established for any boating days. Whether it is cfs (450) or feet (2.7) I believe there should be a defined standard and that the standard be taken into account in the permitting of boats on the river. I feel that this is a major factor in limiting the great big monster of user encounters which in the past has led to documented conflict. Group size: a group of twelve boaters is huge, its a flotilla that would definitely disturb others attempting to use the river for a get away solitude or to enjoy the peace of nature. Max group size of four to six would still be large but probably tolerable If number of groups were limited to four spaced out at time intervals of 2 hour between launches. Please keep in mind that most other users are stationary or going up stream on small sections. Boaters are the only ones going down stream for long stretches, thus every boat coming down stream will pass the other users making their presence felt whereas the other users have a much smaller chance of ever running into or coming across each. I also do not like the thought of boating in the Ellicott Rock down to Spoonauger area as this is the wild trout area and believe that the added activities would stress

the fish causing reduced feeding and spawning opportunities. No woody debris removal except to preempt damage to bridges and culverts. The wild and scenic allure of the area demands no LWD removal other than to prevent damage to the bridges and culverts. The ecosystem depends on the wood debris for growth It is an integral part of the environment.

Alt#5: I believe that the flow limits are too low when looking at optimal boating (450) cfs or (2.7) feet. Once again group size and number . Four groups of four to six people. No woody debris removal except to prevent damage to bridges and culverts. Note historically boaters have taken it upon themselves to clear LWD that they deemed in their way, I find that unacceptable. The responsibility of ensuring this does not happen requires law enforcement present on the river. To maintain the wild and scenic values of the area as well as to protect ecosystem and keep it intact LWD must remain. Permits and reservations for boating, hiking, fishing and camping is the best way to maintain the wild and scenic values and ensure the backwoods experience that most visitors to the area are looking for and that our ancestors wanted maintained and I want maintained for my children.

Alt#6: I have the same observations of six as I did four and five : Establish water flow minimums (450) cfs or (2.7)feet , Limit group and number in group four and four, permits and reservations, no woody debris removal except to prevent damage to bridges and culverts.

If these are the alternatives given then I choose option two. I do not believe that the USFS has to allow boating on this small stretch of river. Zoning is an option. If they can bring their boats can I bring my horse? :) I have mentioned in my last letter my bad experience with boaters and my desire to explore the outdoors with my children and teach them and show them the wonders god has given in as safe and natural setting as possible. Please continue to manage this area to keep it as pristine as possible. If laws are made passed and enforced nobody loses. Please keep this gem in the "deep woods" (that's what my kids call it) a gem. Boating is allowed nearly everywhere, it has taken opportunities for enjoying nature away from others, please do not take the enjoyment away from us on the north fork of the Chattooga. My rights and desires are just as important as those of the mega lobby AW. they are takers not givers. I feel that if Alt #6 is part of the new management plan then all the public input meetings and workshops was propaganda that the decision was already made and the silent majority loses again and once again the squeaky wheel gets the grease .

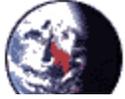
for your time and efforts

With sincere thanks and appreciation

McVey

Jason

mcvey01@alltel.net



"ken"
<kenfran@tds.net>
09/12/2007 01:39 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga Headwaters comments

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

As it stands, the only option that remotely gives parity to Wilderness and W&SR compliant user groups is Option 6, and even it is flawed. To limit the numbers of one qualified user group but no others is unsound reasoning at best. I find it ironic that the one user group with the least environmental impact (boating) is limited while those with more are given free rein. If environmental impact is a real concern, then ALL user groups should be limited and permitted accordingly. This is a common practice in high use and environmentally fragile public lands areas of our country's West.

Also, please take the time to analyze the recent recommended alternatives submitted by American Whitewater in response to your previously issued six options.

Sincerely,

Ken Strickland
Morganton, GA 30560



adventure
<adventure@noc.com>

09/12/2007 01:54 PM

To: jcleeves@fs.fed.us,
comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Upper Chattooga Management Plan

Hello

I'd like to provide a little input into this process of evaluating the different management plan alternatives for the Upper Chattooga, although I have not taken the opportunity to look at these alternatives.

At this point I don't see myself boating on this section of the Chattooga. However, I would cherish the opportunity to paddle something as sacred as this - a pristine river, minimal access, and no commercial activity. I've enjoyed this type of trip before, but rarely in the Southeastern US. The opportunity to enjoy this type of environment has dramatically decreased in my lifetime, and I see this trend continuing.

Please, I ask you not to prevent boaters from enjoying this very special environment.

Thanks....
Kevin

Kevin Kelsey
Custom Accounts
Nantahala Outdoor Center
(800) 232-7238 ext. 333
adventure@noc.com
www.noc.com



"Rick Johnston"
<Rick_Johnston@IIMAK
.com>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga River Access

09/12/2007 02:14 PM

I am writing to express my concern regarding river access for Kayakers and other boaters on the Chattooga and other Wild and Scenic Rivers and Waterways. We desire and respect our open access for boaters on these rivers. I (we) are environmentalists and outdoor enthusiasts who love the outdoors as much if not more than any hikers, hunters etc. In fact many of us are more than boaters. Personally I love walking access as well as on the water access to America's waterways. Any limitations for boaters is unacceptable. And I vote.

Sincerely,
Rick Johnston

-----Rick Johnston

Director of Fac. & Proc. Eng.
IIMAK
310 Commerce Drive
Amherst, NY 14228
716 691 6333 ext. 2496
rick_johnston@iimak.com



"Harder, Eric M"
<Eric.M.Harder@uwsp.edu>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject:

09/12/2007 02:22 PM

Restricting recreational boating on the upper Chattooga will lower the extrinsic value of the area. Less people will be there to utilize the area. Maybe boaters are just there to boat, but our intrinsic values should overtake and allow people the freedom of doing what they are free to do.



"McConnell, David"
<dmcconnell@newportutilities.com>

09/12/2007 02:31 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga River Public Commentary

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

The only proposal that allows unimpeded and fair access to the Upper Chattooga is Option #6. All the other proposals show a great deal of bias toward one particular user group (fishermen) at the consequence of other users. Yes, I am a kayaker. Non motorized boat traffic is the least environmentally obtrusive of any user group that is represented. The Chattooga is a priceless resource, do not allow your agency to be swayed by any lobbying effort that seeks to restrict one groups usage while allowing their constituency unimpeded access. The only rational choice is to allow full access to all non motorized user groups.

Sincerely,

David McConnell, Jr
Energy Advisor
423-625-2867 Phone
423-625-2869 Fax



"Jim Sutton"
<JimSutton@boisestate.
edu>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga Headwaters

09/12/2007 02:27 PM

Mr. John Cleeves
U.S. Forest Service
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212

I understand that it is difficult to please every type user who enjoys this area and that you have some difficult decisions to make but hope that my input as well as the input from the many others who have sent in their comments, will help the USFS come to a well informed and reasonable conclusion as to how to deal with this situation.

I can see both sides of the boat ban agreement and can see that both sides have valid and legitimate concerns of how this area will be impacted by the growing number of users that it will see in the future. That being said, I do not believe that kayak and rafters will take anything away from the so called wilderness feel that is so dear to so many people and I admit that groups of boaters do, at times, make noise that might intrude upon an anglers nature experience, but on the other hand, it saddens me as a paddler and a human being to get out of my kayak and see trashy campsites left by fishermen that not only destroys my feeling of being in a special place, but can see first hand that others have been here and have not taken care of such a wonderful place.

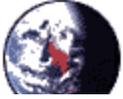
I am in no way, blaming each and every angler for littering the wilderness any more than I am blaming each and every whitewater paddler for making noise, as this is more of a personal deficiency than it is an overall user deficiency.

It is my belief that this area should be open to ALL users and that it should be modeled after the middle fork of the salmon where the only people who be able to float this section, are those who are lucky enough to draw a permit. This would not only open the river to boaters but it would limit the impact that we boaters have on the river corridor.

This shouldn't be a boater vs angler issue, but unfortunately it seems that it has become just that. What this issue should be, is how to accommodate ALL users and in a manner that will effective for the decades to come.

Sincerely,

Jim Sutton



"H. Kyle Anderson"
<hkacpa@yahoo.com>
09/12/2007 02:27 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Attn John Cleeves, Upper Chattooga River

9/12/07

To:
USFS project manager, John Cleeves
Chattooga River

Dear Mr Cleeves:

Please consider these points carefully to insure that the beauty and the right to legally enjoy our public lands are preserved.

Whitewater Boating Above Highway 28 Should Be Adopted.

I have been paddling the Chattooga River since 1979 because it is a reasonable distance from my home, challenging, and exceptionally beautiful. I primarily paddle on a weekday rather than the weekend to avoid the overcrowding and to enhance the beauty of my frequent trips. I have the great hope that when my 11 and 12 year-old sons are old enough and skilled enough, they too will have the right to freely paddle the Chattooga River. I believe that their right is in considerable danger.

Hikers, bikers, paddlers, rafters, hunters and fishermen all pay taxes and, as American citizens, we all have the right to use public property. It is an extremely risky path when you actively work to limit certain groups from using outdoor areas. All users of the Chattooga River love it, just for different reasons.

The Chattooga's headwaters are an important whitewater resource and I should have the ability to legally enjoy this beautiful place. The Agency's studies support the fact that year round boating above Hwy 28 makes sense for the following reasons.

- 1) Boating is self-regulating based on precipitation and water levels.
- 2) There are very few days of available river use each year so boating use would be minimal.
- 3) No negative ecological or biological impacts.
- 4) No significant capital expenditures for improvements is required.
- 5) Slightly impacts only one user group (non-back country anglers) and that impact is stated in the document "that angler solitude from interaction would not be as much of a concern" and any interaction would

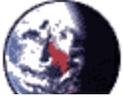
be best measured in seconds.

Other studies also show that backcountry anglers are less prone to fish at the higher flows that I would prefer as a boater.

Sincerely,

Lani & Kyle Anderson
6514 Dobbins Bridge Road
Anderson SC 29626
Phone: (864) 222-0515
hkacpa@yahoo.com

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"hilde schweitzer"
<hilde@amriver.us>

09/12/2007 02:29 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Headwaters letter of support

I live in California and have worked on FERC hydro relicenses with many Forest Service individuals. I have nothing but praise for these people who understand the concept that they serve the entire population and will listen to each stakeholder equally. They make decisions based on equity and take into account all aspects of impact and do not let personal bias enter into their decisions.

I have never boated the Headwaters but my husband did in the 70's and I would very much like the opportunity to do so in the future.

I also work on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon which is managed by another Federal Agency, the NPS. They allow motor rigs on the river which would seem in direct violation of the Organics Act and the Wilderness Act. Personal water craft have little impact on a flowing river and the ban for using them on the Headwaters is irrational and should be rescinded.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Hilde Schweitzer
Coloma, Calif.



"H. Kyle Anderson"
<hkacpa@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 02:34 PM

To: Chattooga Upper
<comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Attn: USFS project manager, John Cleeves

Copy of Letter sent on June 28, 2003.

It is my understanding that all letters sent in prior years have been discarded for the current decision, therefore I am re-submitting my comments. I believe that the issues and comments are still highly relevant.

I do note that since the date of the original letter, both of my children have become avid hikers, campers and boaters utilizing the Chattooga area.

Kyle

Sumter National Forest
Content Analysis Team
PO Box 221150
Salt Lake City, UT 84122.
Email: sumter@fs.fed.us

Re: Comments Regarding the Proposed Sumter Forest Plan and DEIS

Dear Content Analysis Team:

I have been paddling the Chattooga River since 1979 because it is a reasonable distance from my home, challenging, and exceptionally beautiful. I primarily paddle on a weekday rather than the weekend to avoid the overcrowding and to enhance the beauty of my frequent trips. I have the great hope that when my 6 and 7 year-old sons are old enough and skilled enough, they too will have the right to freely paddle the Chattooga River. I believe that their right is in considerable danger.

Hikers, bikers, paddlers, rafters, hunters and fishermen all pay taxes and, as American citizens, we all have the right to use public property. It is an extremely risky path when you actively work to limit certain groups from using outdoor areas. All users of the Chattooga River love it, just for different reasons.

A management plan should address the needs of the public, not just select groups. That way the real issues can be dealt with, rampant littering, pollution, wildlife protection, poaching, commercialization and yes, overcrowding. Through some common sense and compromise, this area could remain pristine for our children, whether they are hikers, bikers, paddlers, rafters, hunters or fishermen.

As such, I wish to comment on the proposed Sumter

Forest Plan. After careful consideration I believe the Forest Service should modify Alternative I (the proposed Forest Plan) to allow boating on the Chattooga headwaters as described in Alternative E of Appendix H of the DEIS.

Only Alternative E in Appendix H allows boaters the same "sense of place" afforded to other existing user groups in this management area. The strong emotional attachment, deep feeling of belonging and powerful connection that I feel for the Chattooga River never seems to be given the same consideration by the Agency as that of other users. The Chattooga's headwaters are an important whitewater resource and I should have the ability to legally enjoy this beautiful place.

The Agency's studies support the fact that year round boating above Hwy 28 makes sense. Appendix H shows:

- 1) Boating is self-regulating based on precipitation and water levels.
- 2) There are very few days of available river use each year so boating use would be minimal.
- 3) No negative ecological or biological impacts.
- 4) No significant capital expenditures for improvements are required.
- 5) Slightly impacts only one user group (non-back country anglers) and that impact is stated in the document "that angler solitude from interaction would not be as much of a concern" and any interaction would be best measured in seconds.

Other studies also show that backcountry anglers are less prone to fish at the higher flows that I would prefer as a boater.

In addition to allowing boating in the Chattooga headwaters I believe these other key points are important in the final Forest Plan:

- 1) Shuttle permits on the Chattooga must be strictly limited to two with strict number limitations and safety concerns met.
- 2) Any new bridges over the river should be worthy of a National Wild and Scenic river of the Chattooga's caliber.
- 3) Increases in Wilderness and Wilderness study areas, greatly expanded riparian corridors, watershed restoration, more management for old growth, wild and scenic area designations for eligible streams and less timber harvest.
- 4) Increases in road less areas, focus on improved water quality in the watershed, especially in the

Stekoa Creek drainage.

5) Increased protection of rare communities and specific forest habitats.

6) Promote black bear management areas as described in Alternative B.

American Whitewater has done a good job in stating the case for boating access in the Chattooga Headwaters in their official comments to the Forest Service and I urge you to carefully consider their analysis and open the river above highway 28. It is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Lani & Kyle Anderson and their children
Ian (7) and Dylan (6)
6514 Dobbins Bridge Road
Anderson SC 29626
Phone: (864) 222-0515
hkacpa@yahoo.com

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<http://answers.yahoo.com/dir/?link=list&sid=396545469>



"H. Kyle Anderson"
<hkacpa@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 02:36 PM

To: Chattooga Upper
<comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: USFS project manager, John Cleeves

Mr. John Cleeves
U.S. Forest Service
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212
comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

RE: Chattooga Scoping Document

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

The alternatives currently proposed by the USFS require substantial amendment because they are not supported by or tied to actual capacity data, are not consistent with the USFS's appeal decision governing this process, are not consistent with applicable law, and will not protect the Chattooga River. The USFS's own capacity study demonstrated that boating is an appropriate use of the Upper Chattooga River, yet 5 of your 6 proposed alternatives ban boating on some or all of the upper river. The Upper Chattooga's capacity to support whitewater boating is not zero, and all action alternatives must allow at least some boating on the entire river. Any alternatives that limit recreation must do so based on the capacity of the river corridor as determined by real data - and must do so equitably.

In addition, the proposed alternatives should be amended as follows:

- Proposed use limits must be tied to a specific standard regarding user capacity. Only one USFS alternative even mentions a standard (Alternative #2).

- Limits must be applied equitably and fairly- not targeted to any specific user groups without significant evidence. All USFS alternatives single out boating for harsh limits and bans - for which there is no evidence.

- Limits should only be imposed when standards are met or exceeded - and not before. Five of the six USFS alternatives limit and/or ban boating immediately without basis.

- Alternatives must include a range of standards for all users. USFS alternatives address a range of arbitrary limits on boaters - but only one alternative would limits other users. For example, a standard of 10, 6, and 2 group encounters per day should be analyzed, as well as provisions that exclude the outlier days when high use can be expected or occurs randomly.

- Alternatives must be based on a capacity for all users and/or individual uses. The proposed USFS alternatives are not based on the social or physical capacity of the river corridor.
- Alternatives must prescribe indirect limits prior to direct limits as is required by USFS policy. Five of the six alternatives implement direct limits (i.e., bans) prior to trying indirect limits first in direct violation of USFS policy.
- Alternatives, including any capacity triggers, should distinguish between high use frontcountry areas and low use backcountry areas. USFS alternatives make no distinction between how many encounters with other users are acceptable in a campground or at a trailhead as opposed to on a trail or river deep in the woods.
- Alternatives should look at varying levels of user created trail closures, user created trail hardening, creation of new trails, campsite closures or relocations, fish stocking, parking, total recreational use, angling use, hiking use, camping use, boating use, and swimming use.

Thank you for considering these ideas.

Sincerely,

Kyle Anderson
6514 Dobbins Bridge Road
Anderson, SC 29626-5709
864-222-0515

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<http://farechase.yahoo.com/>



M Grahame Hamilton
<grahamehamilton@gmail.com>

09/12/2007 02:37 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga Kayak Access

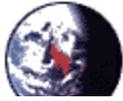
To whom it may concern,

As an active environmentalist and avid kayaker, the Chattooga must be open to self-propelled craft. Kayakers have a strong culture of low environmental impact by leaving-no-trace to the river and its banks.

M Grahame Hamilton

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Michael Briere
 <wh2o@bellsouth.net>
 09/12/2007 02:48 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
 cc:
 Subject: Chattooga.

Please be fair in your decision making. That river was not placed on this earth for only a certain criteria of people. They are "our" forest and rivers and that includes whitewater kayakers. I just don't see the harm. I just had a daughter and one day I would like to be able to take her there kayaking. Please be fair and think of future generations.

Cheers,

Michael Briere
 Bliss-Stick Agent
 828/260-2401 (C)
 828/254-9820 (H)

<http://www.experiencebliss-stick.blogspot.com>
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"jody gyokeres"
<gyokeres@bellsouth.net>

09/12/2007 02:49 PM

To: "john cleeves" <jcleeves@fs.fed.us>, <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: bans should remain in effect!!

dear sirs,

what has been proposed re: opening the headwaters of the upper chattooga river for 21 miles from grimshaw to rte. 28 to boating is a **travesty**. i find it immoral that the powerful lobby group american whitewater has pushed the u.s. forest service to even *consider* this, how *dare* they dictate this use of our pristine watershed! i hope you listen to those of us who aren't as well funded or aggressive, but make up the majority of the 'little' people who appreciate this wilderness and want it kept that way. **forever**.

jody gyokeres
gyokeres@bellsouth.net



"Mitch Logan"
<Mitch.Logan@Northside.com>

09/12/2007 02:48 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga North Fork

The thing that really stands out when walking through the backcountry of the Chattooga North Fork area is the feeling of isolation. This is a place where you can really get away from the people, the phones and the hustle-bustle of our daily lives. Very few of these spots exist in the Southeast but we are fortunate to have at least two in North and Northeast Georgia. The solitude, remoteness and wildness of this area can often be intimidating to the first time visitors but it is a source of revitalization to those who have made the effort to be there. It becomes a place you have to visit every year. The Cohutta Wilderness Area in North Georgia is the other spot that comes to mind.

We have to become good stewards of the environment and become less concerned with the interests of any one group. This is the only way to preserve this outstanding resource for present and future generations.

At the present time, one such group is making demands on the Federal Government to change the rules. These demands have the potential to forever alter the area of the North Fork.

The Management Alternatives that are being considered today have some very valid points. It is honestly very difficult to choose one and say this is the best for all concerned. I believe the decision should be made in what is best for the RIVER and what is best for the LAND.

When viewed from this perspective the obvious choice should be to blend the best points of Alternatives #1, #2 and #3. When combined with the separation (zoning) of the different types of users, this would best allow for the long term protection of the North Fork.

Alternatives #4, #5 and #6 all allow limited removal of woody debris and this is a negative ecological impact to the River and the environment. This simply cannot be allowed and these Alternatives should be removed from consideration. It is not possible to view the removal of woody debris as being in the best interest of the RIVER (unless there is the threat to property or infrastructure as laid out in the details of Alternative #1). All of these Alternatives (4,5,6) allow varying degrees of boating activity and I feel any level of boating activity above the Hwy 28 Bridge would hasten the demise of the area by adding another multitude of visitors to an area that is already fragile. Activities that are so different can never exist in the same area without disruption and negative consequences. Effectively, putting these groups together is effectively pitting them against each other in a wilderness setting. This is not desirable and should be avoided.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Wilderness Act both attempt to secure this resource for future generations. It is time to do just that.

Mitch Logan
2314 Meadow Isle Lane
Lawrenceville GA 30043

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"corbin12"
<corbin12@bellsouth.net>
09/12/2007 02:50 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Comments on 6 alternatives for Chattooga River above Highway 28 bridge

September 12, 2007

Mr. Jerome Thomas

Forest Supervisor

Sumter and Francis Marion National Forests

4931 Broad River Rd

Columbia, SC 29212

Dear Mr. Thomas,

I am writing to comment on alternatives for managing recreation uses on the North Fork of the Chattooga River above the Highway 28 Bridge. **I strongly support Alternative 1** or some combination of Alternatives 1, 2, and 3. **I am extremely strongly against Alternative 6 and also strongly against Alternatives 4 and 5.** Having fished the Chattooga and its tributaries for at least 55 years and having participated in your public meetings/workshops and served on the expert angler panel, I would also like to offer my comments on particular aspects of the 6 alternatives by topic below:

WOODY DEBRIS-

As a professional you are aware of the value of large wood debris to stream habitat an enhancing the abilities of aquatic species to flourish and consequently other species that utilize aquatic species (such as birds, otters, raccoons, etc) As a fisherman and volunteer I am aware of this value because I can see the declination in trout fishing when woody debris is removed and the improvement when it is encouraged or even added (I have participated projects with the USFS and Georgia DNR in which woody debris was added). I am also aware of the removal of large woody debris in sections of a tributary to the West Fork of the Chattooga which has been an excellent trout stream and the ensuing decline of trout fishing in that area of the stream. I am unaware of any USFS forest plans in either Georgia or South Carolina which encourage removal of woody debris from rivers and streams.

Therefore, all alternatives should encourage recruitment of large woody debris in the Chattooga River and removal should in fact be prosecuted as unlawful.

SOLITUDE-

Since my primary abode is within the city limits of Atlanta, GA it is very difficult to express the degree to which solitude is important to me and others in particular that live in large urban areas. Sure we can trout fish on the Chattahoochee in Atlanta, but I rarely do because there is almost no solitude there. What little exists is only available mostly by water craft because much of the river borders private land. My desire for solitude and a wilderness type fishing experience on my own sends me to the mountains. Many times I have driven for 2.5 hours to get to the Chattooga and hiked in another 2 miles just to fish in a place that feels, sounds, and smells untouched. To me such an experience can certainly be classified as an Outstanding Recreational Value. At my age I sure don't want to spend all that time and physical effort to have boaters ruin it not only by their presence, but also by some of them engaging in the rude and crude actions I have encountered on other streams.

In public meetings I have heard boaters state that they too desire solitude and that they should have an opportunity for it by opening up the Chattooga to boating above the Highway 28 bridge. I sincerely hope you will recognize the fallacy and falseness in their statements. First, they can have all the solitude they desire just like me by getting up early in the morning, driving for hours, and then hiking for miles down the trails along the Chattooga and even taking a refreshing dip in it. Second, anyone who has ever observed a boater on a **Mountain** stream or for that matter listened to their discussion of Mountain stream boating can easily see their desire to boat a Mountain stream is exactly the opposite of seeking solitude. They are there for as much adrenaline as their selected mountain stream can possibly supply them in the form of waterfalls, rapids, close calls, speed, and in some instances death defying uncertainty. If this were not the case the boaters trying to gain access to the Chattooga would select slow moving Piedmont and Coastal streams in sparsely populated areas in which they would have their entire run to contemplate nature and enjoy solitude.

TRAILS-

There is discussion about trails in all of the Alternatives and some of those appear to assume that there is either some current problem with the existing trails or certain possible future activities may create problems. Although I have not walked every marked or unmarked trail on the Chattooga above the Highway 28 bridge I have walked a great deal of them on both the Georgia and South Carolina sides. For the most part the trails are currently not a problem to either the natural resources or the solitude. In the past there were siltation problems on this stretch of the river which limited the numbers of aquatic life, however, for the most part that was caused by roads and road crossings. The closing of several roads to public use on both sides of the river in the past 30 years has greatly improved the siltation problems. In fact, studies performed this summer by the USFS and volunteers show the number of fish (both rough and game fish) according to comparative studies have nearly tripled in the past 20 years. Also, the current trails serve to preserve solitude because there is more area to walk without encountering another person than if some of them were closed.

In the future, if certain activities that I have observed on trails and in camping areas on streams are allowed then there may be enough damage to trails that siltation may become a problem and certainly solitude will be greatly affected. Specifically, activities such as riding horses, driving 4 wheelers, dragging beer kegs, or dragging boats is either allowed or not prosecuted by law enforcement then damage may very well occur. These types of activities have occurred on Sarah's Creek and McClure Creek (horses), Hoods Creek (4 wheelers), enumerable streams from the large Chattooga to the small High Shoals (dragging beer kegs), countless streams including the lower Chattooga, the W. Fork Chattooga, and the Nantahala (dragging boats).

Monitoring of activities and usage implemented through both a sign-in system for users and a greatly increased law enforcement presence will help preserve the current trails far into the future.

PARKING-

Several alternatives specify either no net gain in parking or even worse reducing parking opportunities. No net gain in parking is livable for now but may not be in the future. Reducing the current parking or moving it even further from trailheads is absolutely untenable. Implementing such policy may border on discrimination against the elderly and handicapped. I do not know of a single person who has ever utilized the Chattooga River above the Highway 28 bridge who would agree that it is good policy unless they are simply throwing in a red herring to disrupt your process and findings. Anyone who suggests shuttles as a panacea has the mindset of a business bussing in wholesale loads of boaters. Shuttles are totally impractical for the lone individual fishing or hiking early and late in particular when he may be walking out after dark. Further, having shuttles stop on Highway 28 at the bridge would be very unsafe.

In fact, plans should be developed to improve/increase parking now in selective spots such as the lot on the South Carolina side near Thrift Lake at the trailhead which is frequently full of the cars of people who take the trail to the river and even hog hunters in season. Also, the lot on the South Carolina side and the

spaces on the Georgia side at the Highway 28 bridge which are particularly crowded during the delayed harvest trout season. At Burrell's Ford bridge you may want to consider consolidating and marking parking on the South Carolina side while expanding and improving the lot on the Georgia side. Planning for parking should emphasize peak demand times not average demand times. Increasing the parking and the number of people who may be in the lots to observe criminal activity along with improving law enforcement may even stem the rash of vehicle break-ins occurring now.

GROUP SIZE AND ENCOUNTERS-

The group size of 12 included in the Alternatives appears reasonable. Larger groups could be allowed if a permitting system is enforced. If larger groups were permitted then law enforcement could know if there were 20 boy scouts earning merit badges versus 20 biker gang members dragging beer kegs and disturbing the peace. Monitoring this through sign-in and permitting should be very useful to the USFS, local law enforcement, and the public at large. I do not understand the Alternative 2 target of limiting of encounters. Does it mean no more than 3 among groups of 12 or greater or does it mean no more than 3 encounters between any number of individuals within 300 feet of the bridge? Monitoring and controlling encounters should be a function of permitting, sign-ins, and surveys. Any sign-in system should be the kind with a slot so that potential criminals aren't inclined to use open sign-in information to determine who's car might be best and easiest to vandalize or rob. Encounters will take care of themselves as people spread out over the trails unless some groups are either so large they are impassable or if they are hauling things like beer kegs and boats. If too many groups choke the trail the USFS should simply implement a permitting system that either reduces the number of groups or reduces the size of groups permissible.

SIGN-IN AND PERMITTING-

Obviously from my comments above I feel that implementing a sign-in and permitting system may help mitigate some of the woes that exist now or may be created if some of the elements outlined in the Alternatives are implemented. However, such a system should not be unreasonable or onerous to users of the Chattooga above the Highway 28 bridge. If sign-in is implemented there must be stations at all points where a user either enters a trailhead or enters/crosses a road or bridge leading to trailheads. Obvious stations would be at marked parking lots with kiosks. Not so obvious are parking areas or parking spaces distant from those parking lots (such as the parking area leading to the trail to Big Bend Falls on the South Carolina side, the small parking area leading to the local trail known as "the parkway" on the Georgia side, or the trailhead on the East Fork of the Chattooga leading to the North Fork of the Chattooga). Without sign-in stations either at those parking areas or the trailhead users would have to drive to either Burrell's Ford bridge or the Highway 28 bridge to sign in which could add anywhere between 2-15 miles travel to just sign-in.

EDUCATION-

Education of the public using the river if changes are implemented will be necessary, however, many users will either not know of the changes because they don't have access to the local or web outlets for pertinent information or they live too far to even think of whether there are rules or whether they have changed. Unfortunately, you will probably have even more users who are aware of the rules but either plead ignorance and/or just play the odds they will get away with breaking the rules.

LAW ENFORCEMENT-

I am sure it is apparent from my comments above and during the public meetings you have hosted that I have witnessed my share of misbehavior, rude and selfish actions, and actual criminal acts on the Chattooga and other streams both nearby and far away. Some of the people committing these acts were just plain ignorant, however, most knew their behavior was unacceptable and just didn't care and again were playing the odds that they would not get caught. The odds of getting caught need to be made shorter not longer. There needs to be a greater law enforcement presence on the Chattooga and there will be a much greater need in the future. Several years ago the USFS wisely implemented a fee for

parking on many streams in Georgia to pay for things like road and campground maintenance. Unfortunately, that policy was discontinued. Perhaps at least part of the salary of a law enforcement person could be funded through implementation of parking fees. I realize this could be a contentious issue but it is worth consideration.

Thank you for considering my comments.

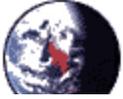
Sincerely,

M. A. (Alex) Watson, Jr.

764 Wildwood Rd

Atlanta, GA 30324

(404) 872-1021



"Coombs, Sean P."
<coombssp@ornl.gov>
09/12/2007 02:50 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Chattooga River Scoping Document

Mr. John Cleaves
U.S. Forest Service
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212
comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

RE: Chattooga Scoping Document

Dear Mr. Cleaves,

I have always felt that any waterway on federally owned or managed land should be open to all users to the greatest extent possible. With this in mind I hope you can understand how I was extremely alarmed after reviewing the Chattooga River Scoping Document and the alternatives it proposed. It is my firm belief that the alternatives contained in the scoping document require substantial amendment. They do not appear to be supported by or tied to actual capacity data, are not consistent with the USFS's appeal decision governing this process, and are not consistent with applicable law; as such, I cannot see their effectiveness in governing use of the river. It has been brought to my attention that your organization's capacity study demonstrated that boating is an appropriate use of the Upper Chattooga River, yet 5 of your 6 proposed alternatives ban boating on some or all of the upper river. The Upper Chattooga's capacity to support whitewater boating is obviously not zero; therefore any alternatives must allow at least some boating on the entire river. Further more, an alternative that limits recreation must do so based on the capacity of the river corridor as determined by real data; and must do so equitably.

In doing research on this particular issue I discovered the following list of recommendations and found them to be nearly all encompassing with regard to the matter at hand, and so I decided to include them in this communiqué with my full support as I feel they sum things up quite nicely.

In addition, the proposed alternatives should be amended as follows:

- Proposed use limits must be tied to a specific standard regarding user capacity. Only one USFS alternative even mentions a standard (Alternative #2).
- Limits must be applied equitably and fairly– not targeted to *any* specific user groups without significant evidence. All USFS alternatives single out boating for harsh limits and bans – for which there is no evidence.
- Limits should only be imposed when standards are met or exceeded – and not before. Five of the six USFS alternatives limit and/or ban boating immediately without basis.
- Alternatives must include a range of standards for *all users*. USFS alternatives address a range of arbitrary limits on boaters – but only one alternative would limits other users. For example, a standard of 10, 6, and 2 group encounters per day should be analyzed, as well as provisions that exclude the outlier days when high use can be expected or occurs randomly.

- Alternatives must be based on a capacity for all users and/or individual uses. The proposed USFS alternatives are not based on the social or physical capacity of the river corridor.
- Alternatives must prescribe indirect limits prior to direct limits as is required by USFS policy. Five of the six alternatives implement direct limits (i.e., bans) prior to trying indirect limits first in direct violation of USFS policy.
- Alternatives, including any capacity triggers, should distinguish between high use front country areas and low use backcountry areas. USFS alternatives make no distinction between how many encounters with other users are acceptable in a campground or at a trailhead as opposed to on a trail or river deep in the woods.
- Alternatives should look at varying levels of user created trail closures, user created trail hardening, creation of new trails, campsite closures or relocations, fish stocking, parking, total recreational use, angling use, hiking use, camping use, boating use, and swimming use.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerest Regards,

Sean P. Coombs



Pat Hopton
<scotts_creek58@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 02:55 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Comments on Management Alternatives for the Upper Chattooga River

September 12, 2007

Mr Cleeves,

Please accept these comments on alternatives for managing recreation uses on the upper Chattooga River. I am a resident of Clayton, GA and have recreationally used the Chattooga River for 21 years, with an average of 15 trips per year. All my trips to the Chattooga River are in the area upstream of the Highway 28 bridge, also known as the upper Chattooga River. I use the "backcountry" setting along the river; that is, my trips are away from the "frontcountry" near bridges and access points. My recreational use of the river includes trout fishing, camping, and hiking. I visit the Chattooga River year-round in all weather conditions, thus my recreational use of the river includes both high and low water flow levels.

My interest in the river is in preserving the aesthetic values inherent in the wilderness setting found on the upper Chattooga River, including the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area. These values include solitude, wildness, and remoteness. In addition, I wish to preserve the social values found on the upper Chattooga River, including the need to avoid encounters with conflicting user groups. And finally, I desire that the biological needs of the upper Chattooga River are met, including the presence of large woody debris, in order to preserve and enhance the cold water fisheries that provide a high quality fishing experience.

As a fisherman seeking high quality fishing in a backcountry setting, I find that the certain user groups may adversely conflict with the experience I am seeking. An encounter with a boater on the stream on which I am fishing conflicts with the experience by disrupting my solitude with bright colored boats and noise. The splashing and passing of boats disturbs the fish making them difficult to catch, thus lowering the quality of the fishing. In a stream as small as the upper Chattooga River, it would be impossible to avoid these conflicts between boaters and fisherman. Since I use the entire river year round and during all flow periods, restricting boating to certain areas, seasons, or water level periods would not prevent the conflicts with my fishing and backcountry experience.

I desire that large woody debris be maintained or enhanced in the upper Chattooga River with only limited removal allowed on a case-by-case basis. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Boaters may remove large woody debris in order to have safe passage through the stream, thus adversely affecting the cold water fisheries which will lower the quality of my fishing experience.

In order to address my aesthetic, social, and biological values, I prefer that conflicting user groups be separated into different user "zones". This can be done by the boaters continuing to use the lower 36 miles of the Chattooga River downstream from Highway 28 including the West Fork, and with the non-boaters using the upper 21 miles of the Chattooga River upstream from Highway 28. "Zoning" of user groups is a fair, common, ethical and legal land management practice that successfully avoids conflicts between non-compatible user groups. This will preserve the aesthetic, social, and biological values that I seek in the upper Chattooga River.

Here are my specific comments and concerns on the Standards and Actions for each alternative. The tables with bullet statements below correspond to the tables and bullets found in the August 14, 2007 request for public comments scoping letter. My concerns with specific proposed actions are marked in red.

ALTERNATIVE 1

Maintain current management. Foot travel only. No boating above the Highway 28 Bridge.

Standard and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.

This alternative preserves the solitude, wildness, and remoteness by limiting commercial and organized group size to 12 persons, thus adequately addressing my aesthetic values. This alternative preserves the current “zoning” of conflicting user groups, thus adequately addressing my social values. This alternative maintains and enhances large woody debris while allowing for limited removal on a case-by-case basis, thus adequately addressing my biological values. **Alternative 1 should be the Preferred Alternative.**

ALTERNATIVE 2

Primary objective is to manage encounters among existing users. Foot travel only. No parking lots inside the corridor boundary and a permitting system will be implemented for all existing users. No boating above the Highway 28 Bridge.

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Encounters</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't agree. Impractical to monitor or enforce. In the Delayed Harvest section encounters between fishermen normally exceed more than three per day yet a high quality fishing experience is still available. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.• Agree. No concerns.• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites

	<p>from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. This is impractical and not necessary at the Highway 28 bridge. This area receives extensive use by fisherman using the Delayed Harvest section and by hikers using the Chattooga River Trail, Bartram Trail, and Foothills Trail. Relocating the existing parking areas to outside the Corridor would force fisherman and hikers to walk on the shoulder of Highway 28 in order to access the river. This action would create a safety hazard to fisherman and hikers, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience.
<i>User Registration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Don't agree. Impractical to monitor or enforce. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Primary objective is to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources. Foot travel only. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. No boating above the Highway 28 Bridge.

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.

Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area.
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ALTERNATIVE 4

Primary objectives are to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources and encounters between users. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. Limited woody debris removal allowed. Year-round any level boating on USFS lands upstream of Bull Pen Bridge and limited boating in the Wilderness to .25 mile above Burrell's Ford Bridge (4 winter months & 2.4 ft level and higher).

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating Below Private Property to Bull Pen Bridge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. In order for boaters to access the river below the private property, enlargements would have to be made to the existing user-created access trail and trailhead in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness area. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area by enlarging existing access trails and trailheads to the river. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Boating from Bull Pen Bridge to ¼ Mile Above Burrells Ford Bridge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. In order to access the river, a new parking area and boater put-in would have to be created at the Bull Pen bridge and access trail created ¼ mile above Burrells Ford bridge. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Bull Pen and Burrells Ford bridge area by creating

	<p>additional access areas to the river.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
Group Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
Woody Debris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the cold water fisheries by allowing the removal of large woody debris.
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Don't agree. In order to access the river, a new boater put-in with access trail would have to be created at the Bull Pen bridge and access trail created ¼ mile above Burrells Ford bridge. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Bull Pen and Burrells Ford bridge area by creating additional access areas to the river. • Agree. No concerns.
Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above.
Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area. There is not sufficient parking on the Grimshawes Road or at Bull Pen bridge to accommodate additional visitor use, including boating. Any improvements to the parking areas would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area.
User Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

ALTERNATIVE 5

Primary objectives are to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources and encounters between users. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. Limited woody debris removal allowed. Boating

allowed between Grimshawes Bridge and Lick Log Creek (year-round at 2.3 ft and higher).

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating Between Grimshawes Bridge and Lick Log</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. • Don't agree. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. This action has an adverse social impact by condoning public activities on private property. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the cold water fisheries by allowing the removal of large woody debris.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Don't agree. In order to access the river, a new boater put-in with access trail would have to be created at the Grimshawes bridge and access trail created Lick Log. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Grimshawes bridge and Lick Log areas by creating additional access areas to the river. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area. There is not sufficient parking on the Grimshawes bridge or at Lick Log areas to

	accommodate additional visitor use, including boating. Any improvements to the parking areas would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the upper Chattooga River area.
User Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

ALTERNATIVE 6

Primary objectives are to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources and encounters between users. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. Limited woody debris removal allowed. Unlimited boating is allowed on entire river and tributaries upstream of Highway 28 Bridge (year-round, any time, any water level and any number of floaters per day).

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating Between Grimshawes Bridge and Highway 28 Bridge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action has an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. This action has an adverse social impact by condoning public activities on private property. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the cold water fisheries by allowing the removal of large woody debris.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic

	<p>impact on the local area. There is not sufficient parking on the Grimshaws bridge, Bull Pen bridge, Burrells Ford bridge, Lick Log, or Highway 28 bridge areas to accommodate additional visitor use, including boating. Any improvements to the parking areas would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the upper Chattooga River area.</p>
<p>User Registration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

In conclusion, I desire that the outstanding resource values of high quality fishing, wilderness and solitude found on the upper Chattooga River be preserved. This river has regional significance in that it is the only river of its size that offers high quality fishing in a backcountry setting requiring foot travel only. Trends suggest that recreational use of the upper Chattooga River is likely to increase as the rate of population increases for the region, which may exceed 20% over the next decade. In 1999 the upper Chattooga River was named one of the country's 100 best trout streams by Trout Unlimited due to the high quality fishing and backcountry experience of solitude. The Preferred Alternative should maintain the wilderness and solitude of the upper Chattooga River by limiting group size in Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area and by continuing the current practice of zoning of conflicting user groups. The Preferred Alternative should preserve the high quality cold water fisheries by maintaining or enhancing large woody debris in the upper Chattooga River while allowing limited removal only on a case by case basis.

It is widely accepted that some recreational user groups adversely conflict with the experience of other recreational user groups. Fishermen seeking a high quality fishing experience and hikers and others seeking solitude and a wilderness experience are adversely affected by the bright colors, noise, and splashing created by boaters. Fishermen and hikers use the entire stretch of the upper Chattooga River year round and at all water flow levels, therefore restricting boaters to certain river sections, seasons, or water flow periods would not prevent these conflicts. Since the conception of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River, these conflicting user groups have been successfully managed by using the concept of "zoning". The boaters have use of the lower 36 miles of the Chattooga River downstream from Highway 28 including the West Fork. Other users seeking a high quality fishing experience, wilderness and solitude have use of the upper 21 miles of the Chattooga River upstream from Highway 28. This practice of zoning is a fair, common, ethical and legal land management practice that successfully avoids conflicts between non-compatible user groups. This preserves the aesthetic, social, and biological values that we all desire in the upper Chattooga River. The Preferred Alternative should continue the current practice of zoning conflicting uses on the Chattooga River.

Finally, I ask that the interdisciplinary team consider the effect the proposed actions may have on tributaries to the upper Chattooga River. It is not clear if the proposed actions apply only to the main stem of the river or if they apply to all streams in the watershed. If it is the latter, then we may expect the same concerns over adverse effects on the aesthetic, social, and biological values on the tributaries, most notably Reed Creek and East Fork. A review of boater "blog" websites shows that the boaters desire to experience these tributaries as well as the main stem. Please clarify the scope of the decision; that is, whether the Preferred Alternative will apply to only the main stem of the upper Chattooga River or will also include all tributaries.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please continue to keep me on your mailing list for all further notices and actions pertaining to this proposed action.

/s/ Pat Hopton

PATRICK HOPTON
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September 12, 2007

Mr Cleeves,

Please accept these comments on alternatives for managing recreation uses on the upper Chattooga River. I am a resident of Clayton, GA and have recreationally used the Chattooga River for 21 years, with an average of 15 trips per year. All my trips to the Chattooga River are in the area upstream of the Highway 28 bridge, also known as the upper Chattooga River. I use the "backcountry" setting along the river; that is, my trips are away from the "frontcountry" near bridges and access points. My recreational use of the river includes trout fishing, camping, and hiking. I visit the Chattooga River year-round in all weather conditions, thus my recreational use of the river includes both high and low water flow levels.

My interest in the river is in preserving the aesthetic values inherent in the wilderness setting found on the upper Chattooga River, including the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area. These values include solitude, wildness, and remoteness. In addition, I wish to preserve the social values found on the upper Chattooga River, including the need to avoid encounters with conflicting user groups. And finally, I desire that the biological needs of the upper Chattooga River are met, including the presence of large woody debris, in order to preserve and enhance the cold water fisheries that provide a high quality fishing experience.

As a fisherman seeking high quality fishing in a backcountry setting, I find that the certain user groups may adversely conflict with the experience I am seeking. An encounter with a boater on the stream on which I am fishing conflicts with the experience by disrupting my solitude with bright colored boats and noise. The splashing and passing of boats disturbs the fish making them difficult to catch, thus lowering the quality of the fishing. In a stream as small as the upper Chattooga River, it would be impossible to avoid these conflicts between boaters and fisherman. Since I use the entire river year round and during all flow periods, restricting boating to certain areas, seasons, or water level periods would not prevent the conflicts with my fishing and backcountry experience.

I desire that large woody debris be maintained or enhanced in the upper Chattooga River with only limited removal allowed on a case-by-case basis. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Boaters may remove large woody debris in order to have safe passage through the stream, thus adversely affecting the cold water fisheries which will lower the quality of my fishing experience.

In order to address my aesthetic, social, and biological values, I prefer that conflicting user groups be separated into different user "zones". This can be done by the boaters continuing to use the lower 36 miles of the Chattooga River downstream from Highway 28 including the West Fork, and with the non-boaters using the upper 21 miles of the Chattooga River upstream from Highway 28. "Zoning" of user groups is a fair, common, ethical and legal land management practice that successfully avoids conflicts between non-compatible user groups. This will preserve the aesthetic, social, and biological values that I seek in the upper Chattooga River.

Here are my specific comments and concerns on the Standards and Actions for each alternative. The tables with bullet statements below correspond to the tables and bullets found in the August 14, 2007 request for public comments scoping letter. My concerns with specific proposed actions are marked in red.

ALTERNATIVE 1	
Maintain current management. Foot travel only. No boating above the Highway 28 Bridge.	
Standard and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

This alternative preserves the solitude, wildness, and remoteness by limiting commercial and organized group size to 12 persons, thus adequately addressing my aesthetic values. This alternative preserves the current “zoning” of conflicting user groups, thus adequately addressing my social values. This alternative maintains and enhances large woody debris while allowing for limited removal on a case-by-case basis, thus adequately addressing my biological values.

Alternative 1 should be the Preferred Alternative.

ALTERNATIVE 2	
Primary objective is to manage encounters among existing users. Foot travel only. No parking lots inside the corridor boundary and a permitting system will be implemented for all existing users. No boating above the Highway 28 Bridge.	
Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Encounters</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Impractical to monitor or enforce. In the Delayed Harvest section encounters between fishermen normally exceed more than three per day yet a high quality fishing experience is still available. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

<i>Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. This is impractical and not necessary at the Highway 28 bridge. This area receives extensive use by fisherman using the Delayed Harvest section and by hikers using the Chattooga River Trail, Bartram Trail, and Foothills Trail. Relocating the existing parking areas to outside the Corridor would force fisherman and hikers to walk on the shoulder of Highway 28 in order to access the river. This action would create a safety hazard to fisherman and hikers, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience.
<i>User Registration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Don't agree. Impractical to monitor or enforce. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience.

ALTERNATIVE 3

Primary objective is to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources. Foot travel only. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. No boating above the Highway 28 Bridge.

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area.

ALTERNATIVE 4	
<p>Primary objectives are to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources and encounters between users. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. Limited woody debris removal allowed. Year-round any level boating on USFS lands upstream of Bull Pen Bridge and limited boating in the Wilderness to .25 mile above Burrell's Ford Bridge (4 winter months & 2.4 ft level and higher).</p>	
Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<p><i>Boating Below Private Property to Bull Pen Bridge</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. In order for boaters to access the river below the private property, enlargements would have to be made to the existing user-created access trail and trailhead in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness area. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area by enlarging existing access trails and trailheads to the river. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<p><i>Boating from Bull Pen Bridge to ¼ Mile Above Burrells Ford Bridge</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. In order to access the river, a new parking area and boater put-in would have to be created at the Bull Pen bridge and access trail created ¼ mile above Burrells Ford bridge. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Bull Pen and Burrells Ford bridge area by creating additional access areas to the river. • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<p><i>Group Size</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the cold water fisheries by allowing the removal of large woody debris.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Don't agree. In order to access the river, a new boater put-in with access trail would have to be created at the Bull Pen bridge and access trail created ¼ mile above Burrells Ford bridge. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Bull Pen and Burrells Ford bridge area by creating additional access areas to the river. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area. There is not sufficient parking on the Grimshawes Road or at Bull Pen bridge to accommodate additional visitor use, including boating. Any improvements to the parking areas would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area.
<i>User Registration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

ALTERNATIVE 5

Primary objectives are to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources and encounters between users. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. Limited woody debris removal allowed. Boating allowed between Grimshawes Bridge and Lick Log Creek (year-round at 2.3 ft and higher).

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating Between Grimshawes Bridge and Lick Log</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fishermen. Don't agree. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action would have an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. This action has an adverse social impact by condoning public activities on private property. Agree. No concerns. Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't Agree. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the cold water fisheries by allowing the removal of large woody debris.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. No concerns. Don't agree. In order to access the river, a new boater put-in with access trail would have to be created at the Grimshawes bridge and access trail created Lick Log. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the Grimshawes bridge and Lick Log areas by creating additional access areas to the river. Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. Same as above. Same as above. Same as above.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. No concerns. Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area. There is not sufficient parking on the Grimshawes bridge or at Lick Log areas to accommodate additional visitor use, including boating. Any improvements to the parking areas would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the upper Chattooga River area.
<i>User Registration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. No concerns.

ALTERNATIVE 6

Primary objectives are to manage biophysical impacts on natural resources and encounters between users. Emphasis is on trail and campsite mitigation. Limited woody debris removal allowed. Unlimited boating is allowed on entire river and tributaries upstream of Highway 28 Bridge (year-round, any time, any water level and any number of floaters per day).

Standards and Actions	Comments and Concerns
<i>Boating Between Grimshawes Bridge and Highway 28 Bridge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. Backcountry use of the river, including fisherman, occurs during all water levels and seasons. Boating adversely conflicts with other backcountry recreational use, including fishing and hiking. This action has an adverse social impact by disrupting the solitude and wilderness experience of all backcountry river users and having a negative impact on the catch rate for fishermen. This action has an adverse social impact by condoning public activities on private property. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Group Size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Woody Debris</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. Research has found that large woody debris is important to the biology of cold water streams in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. This action would have an adverse biological impact on the cold water fisheries by allowing the removal of large woody debris.
<i>Trails</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Campsites: Wilderness and Wild segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't Agree. My experience does not show an overabundance of campsites in the Wilderness or Wild sections. The scarcity of flat areas prevents new campsites from being created. This action would create unnecessary and unreasonable law enforcement activity, having an adverse social impact on the visitor experience. • Same as above. • Same as above. • Same as above.
<i>Campsites: Recreation and Scenic segments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns. • Agree. No concerns.
<i>Parking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't agree. There is a need for parking management, including a possible increase in capacity, at the Highway 28 bridge. This action would suppress use of the Delayed Harvest section, having an adverse economic impact on the local area. There is not sufficient parking on the Grimshawes bridge, Bull Pen bridge, Burrells Ford bridge, Lick Log, or Highway 28 bridge areas to accommodate additional visitor use, including boating. Any improvements to the parking areas would have an adverse biological impact on the soils, water quality, flora, and fauna in the upper Chattooga River area.
<i>User Registration</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. No concerns.

In conclusion, I desire that the outstanding resource values of high quality fishing, wilderness and solitude found on the upper Chattooga River be preserved. This river has regional significance in that it is the only river of its size that offers high quality fishing in a backcountry setting requiring foot travel only. Trends suggest that recreational use of the upper Chattooga River is likely to increase as the rate of population increases for the region, which may exceed 20% over the next decade. In 1999 the upper Chattooga River was named one of the country's 100 best trout streams by Trout Unlimited due to the high quality fishing and backcountry experience of solitude. The Preferred Alternative should maintain the wildness and solitude of the upper Chattooga River by limiting group size in Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area and by continuing the current practice of zoning of conflicting user groups. The Preferred Alternative should preserve the high quality cold

water fisheries by maintaining or enhancing large woody debris in the upper Chattooga River while allowing limited removal only on a case by case basis.

It is widely accepted that some recreational user groups adversely conflict with the experience of other recreational user groups. Fishermen seeking a high quality fishing experience and hikers and others seeking solitude and a wilderness experience are adversely affected by the bright colors, noise, and splashing created by boaters. Fishermen and hikers use the entire stretch of the upper Chattooga River year round and at all water flow levels, therefore restricting boaters to certain river sections, seasons, or water flow periods would not prevent these conflicts. Since the conception of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River, these conflicting user groups have been successfully managed by using the concept of "zoning". The boaters have use of the lower 36 miles of the Chattooga River downstream from Highway 28 including the West Fork. Other users seeking a high quality fishing experience, wildness and solitude have use of the upper 21 miles of the Chattooga River upstream from Highway 28. This practice of zoning is a fair, common, ethical and legal land management practice that successfully avoids conflicts between non-compatible user groups. This preserves the aesthetic, social, and biological values that we all desire in the upper Chattooga River. The Preferred Alternative should continue the current practice of zoning conflicting uses on the Chattooga River.

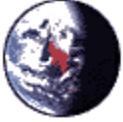
Finally, I ask that the interdisciplinary team consider the effect the proposed actions may have on tributaries to the upper Chattooga River. It is not clear if the proposed actions apply only to the main stem of the river or if they apply to all streams in the watershed. If it is the latter, then we may expect the same concerns over adverse effects on the aesthetic, social, and biological values on the tributaries, most notably Reed Creek and East Fork. A review of boater "blog" websites shows that the boaters desire to experience these tributaries as well as the main stem. Please clarify the scope of the decision; that is, whether the Preferred Alternative will apply to only the main stem of the upper Chattooga River or will also include all tributaries.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please continue to keep me on your mailing list for all further notices and actions pertaining to this proposed action.

/s/ Pat Hopton

PATRICK HOPTON
205 Scotts Creek Road
Clayton, GA 30525

scotts_creek58@yahoo.com



Andrew Blum
<ablum@cidcm.umd.edu
u>

09/12/2007 02:59 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Boating in the Upper Chattooga Watershed

To whom it may concern,

I am an avid kayaker and hiker from the Washington DC area who has been blessed to kayak and hike in and around the Chattooga river. I believe strongly that kayakers impact their environment much less than hikers, backpackers, anglers, horses or mountain bikes. Therefore I believe a fair plan should be put in place on the Upper Chattooga that allows all users, including kayakers, to use the river. In particular, I believe there should not be any special restrictions on kayakers, a low-impact group, that do not apply to anglers or other user groups.

Thank you for time.

Best,
Andy

--

Andrew Blum, Ph.D.
Director
ICONS Project (www.icons.umd.edu)
CIDCM - University of Maryland
0145 Tydings, College Park, MD 20742
301-405-4511
ablum@cidcm.umd.edu



larry cave
<kayakcavelarry@yahoo
.com>

09/12/2007 03:07 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Chattooga

To whom it may concern,

I support the use of this area for boating! The impact of boating is at best minimal compared to anglers (which I am one) leaving line, lures going off trails, ect. I feel this area can be used for both activates. Not just one group of outdoor enthusiast should be singled out and keep off this river. I say all or none!!

Larry Martin
Louisville, Ky

Building a website is a piece of cake.
Yahoo! Small Business gives you [all the tools to get online.](#)



M Grahame Hamilton
<mhamilton@hotmail.com>
m>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: I support Chattooga Option #6

09/12/2007 03:08 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am an environmentalist and kayaker that supports option #6. Being from Ottawa, I and members of my paddling club spend money in the small towns on our kayaking trips. We inject tourism money into small, local economies. By making your area less attractive to boaters, you will directly hurt small campgrounds, grocery stores, and restaurants.

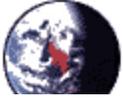
We always pick up after ourselves and leave no trace. We are friendly and respectful to other river users and landowners.

Please do not perceive the colors of kayaking gear to be ruining the look of a river. They are bright colors for safety and rescue purposes.

I support option #6!

Thank you,

MG Hamilton
Ottawa, ON, CA



cadams3
<cadams3@utk.edu>

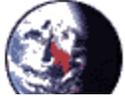
09/12/2007 03:10 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: CHATTOOGA

Hi,

My name is Bett Adams and I am a kayaker and avid fisherman and believe that there should be no boating ban on the Chattooga watershed. Sumter national forest is housing the only wild and scenic river that has a boating ban on it and to me this is just foolish. The levels necessary to paddle those watersheds (above section 2) would be way too high to fish in when runnable in a kayak. I have spent many days on the Chattooga kayaking and fishing and the boating ban on those sections above section 2 are about as necessary as a fishing ban on sections 2, 3, and 4.

Bett Adams
(423) 504-4336



"Bill Jacobs"
<billjacobs@nctv.com>
09/12/2007 03:16 PM

To: <Comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc: <jcleeves@fs.fed.us>
Subject: Upper Chattooga boating ban

Ladies & Gentlemen:

We wish to submit these comments regarding proposed revisions to boating use on the upper reaches of the Chattooga River.

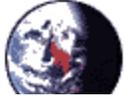
Everyone likes to find new, more challenging, and more exotic locations to pursue their interests. But some uses are incompatible with many other uses, and must be limited if there is to be any place for those other users to pursue their interests. Such is the situation with proposals to permit boating above Highway 28 on the Chattooga River.

Opening a mountain river to boating, particularly in an area that is as accessible to major cities as is the case with the Chattooga, simply converts the stream into a party river that is no longer compatible with calmer pleasures such as hiking and fishing. Visit the lower Chattooga, the Nantahala, or even the Horsepasture below Highway 281 to see the effects of rafting and boating use – lots of people, both on the river and along the banks (contributing to erosion, of course), noise, increased trash. With craft ranging from 8-person rafts, to single-person kayaks and the “play boats” of the type that are commonly carried in to the Horsepasture (even below Rainbow Falls), no stretch of a river is immune from overwhelming (at least to other activities) usage by boaters.

We believe that boaters and rafting companies already have plenty of miles of river to run. Please leave some undisturbed waters and river valleys for the rest of us.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Bill Jacobs
Susan Posey
PO Box 1336
Cashiers, NC



"Philip Thomas"
<pmthoma@gmail.com>

09/12/2007 03:19 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Chattooga Ban

This e-mail concerns the current ban on the upper reaches of the Chattooga River.

As an avid hiker, fisherman, AND whitewater kayaker, I can easily see both sides of this controversial topic. I understand that some people go into this area to seek solitude in a peaceful, clean environment; however, I do not understand how allowing whitewater kayaking will affect this experience at all.

First of all, kayakers are one of the lowest impact groups that use wilderness areas. Where fishermen often lose fishing line, lures, and hooks in the river and some hikers can affect the ecosystem by building fires and dropping trash, kayakers walk in, float down the river, and walk out.

Also, kayakers would have an extremely small impact on the solitude of the river. Seeing other people having fun in the woods happens all the time anyways, so why is seeing a kayaker on a creek any different than passing a fellow hiker on a remote hiking trail? Kayakers would be on this river for the same reason as hikers...to seek a remote and beautiful river and enjoy the outdoors.

Finally, Kayaking on the Upper Chattooga River would only be feasible above about 2.5 feet on the highway 76 bridge gauge. This level is much higher than optimum fishing levels on this stretch of river. Anyone wading or swimming on this stretch at those levels would be facing inherent danger of getting swept downstream and through large rapids. There is no reason that fishermen and kayakers could not coexist peacefully on this stretch of river.

I highly recommend that the Forest Service adopts Option #6 for the management of the Chattooga River, allowing hard boating on the whole of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River.



"Ryan Zimny"
<rzimny@CLOQUET.k1
2.mn.us>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chatooga River

09/12/2007 03:27 PM

I believe the only valid options for the upper reaches of the river are those that include whitewater paddling as a valid activity along with other respectable forms of outdoor recreation such as hiking and fishing. There is no scientifically valid rationale for continuing the illegal ban. I would love to visit that portion of the country again in order to paddle this section of river.

Ryan Zimny
Science Teacher
Head Alpine Ski Coach
Assistant Track Coach
Cloquet Senior High School
218-879-3393 ext. 1001
<http://www.tiekelliverlodge.com>



Joshua R Egenolf
<josh.egenolf@gmail.com>

09/12/2007 03:31 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Scoping Comments on Chattooga Headwaters from the UGA
Whitewater Club

Dear Mr. Cleeves--

Please accept these comments as the official scoping comments from myself, Josh Egenolf, and the University of Georgia Whitewater Club. The scoping comment document is attached to this message. Thank you for this opportunity and good luck in bringing this process to fruition. Have a great day.

Sincerely,
--Josh Egenolf

josh.egenolf@gmail.com



UGA_Chattooga.Comment.Letter.doc



"H. Kyle Anderson"
<hkacpa@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 03:34 PM

To: Chattooga Upper
<comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga Scoping Document

Mr. John Cleeves
U.S. Forest Service
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212
comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

RE: Chattooga Scoping Document

9/12/07

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

First, I was surprised to find that I began writing letters regarding access to the Chattooga back in 2001. After reading those letters and other people's comments, I was more surprised in my belief that the entire outdoor community is worse off now than when it started.

The issue then and now continues to be the use of public property. Hikers, bikers, paddlers, rafters, swimmers, hunters and anglers all pay taxes and, as American citizens, we all have the right to use public property. It is an extremely risky path when people actively work to limit certain groups from using outdoor areas. All users of the Chattooga area love it, just for different reasons.

A management plan should address the needs of the public, not just select groups. That way the real issues can be dealt with, rampant littering, pollution, erosion, wildlife protection, poaching, commercialization and yes, overcrowding. Through some common sense and compromise, this area could remain pristine for our children, whether they are hikers, bikers, paddlers, swimmers, rafters, hunters or anglers.

The sad part is that the process the USFS has pursued has not only driven an ugly wedge between different users of the Chattooga area but has spanned many years and wasted money that could have been used to protect, repair, improve and enhance the wilderness.

I have read the six alternatives and find that five of the six limit or completely ban boating, all six place arbitrary limits on boaters but not on any other user group and all six create logistical and enforcement nightmares.

I have hiked and paddled the Chattooga area since 1979 and never have I seen more trash, campfire rings, erosion and yes, encounters with other users exceeding 3 per day, sometimes passing groups of 20 to 30 hikers

or campers. The Upper Chattooga area has some of the most abused and crowded areas that I have visited. It is sad that the groups wanting to retain exclusive use of the Upper Chattooga are the very ones who have been abusing it for the last 31 years.

The proposals make it seem clear that USFS intends to continue the ban on boating or allow boating under such limited conditions that it will create severe conflict very quickly. I say just get it over with so we can address the real problems that plague this great resource and quit playing politics and manipulating user groups with false data and facts.

Sincerely disappointed in the USFS,

Kyle Anderson
6514 Dobbins Bridge Road
Anderson, SC 29626-5709
864-222-0515

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<http://answers.yahoo.com/dir/?link=list&sid=396545433>



Lindsay Marie Gearhart
<samsgrading99@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 03:36 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Wild and Scenic Chattooga River

The Forest Service ban should remain in effect to truly maintain the wild nature of the Upper Chattooga. The boaters and commercial rafting companies already have access to (and pretty much control of) the lower 36 miles of the Chattooga. Our Congressional representatives should get involved in this issue.

Martha T Lindsay

resident of:

Highlands, NC

Clemson, SC