



"Chris Hellmann"
<chrishellmann@alltel.net>

09/12/2007 04:57 PM

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

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

RE: Chattooga Scoping Document

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

After reading the scoping document I am very concerned that all of these alternatives offer very limited boating opportunities. Based on the history of this project I believe much of the discussion has been predicated with an assumption of conflict between the needs of fisherman and whitewater boaters. As someone who partakes in both activities and does so throughout a wide area (Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Colorado, Washington, and Georgia) I see little to suggest these two sports are mutually exclusive.

Most whitewater boaters want to run the rivers in this area when they are at high levels. Levels that are higher than most fisherman consider ideal. When the river level is ideal for fishing its usually too low to be of interest to whitewater boating.

Most whitewater boaters are very considerate of fisherman and make an effort to pass by as far away as possible so as not to disturb them. Unfortunately there are occasionally a few boaters who don't and those of us who do make an effort to discipline them when we see this happening.

Whitewater boating is one of the lowest environmental impact activities one can take part in the wilderness. It truly epitomizes the "Leave No Trace ethic". Unless a portage is required there are literally no traces left of boater activity. Even if a portage is required it leaves only footprints. Most boaters are highly environmentally conscious and are scrupulous about packing out any trash. We often find and carry out trash left by fisherman and others.

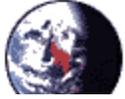
Most rivers I run have a mix of fisherman and boaters on any given day. In the nine years I have been river running I have never witnessed a hostile incident between the two participants. In all cases everyone got along very amicably.

The USFS needs to reconsider the current alternatives to permit more boating on the Chattooga than any of the offered alternatives permits. I do not see any reason to restrict

the number of users until an extended period of unrestricted whitewater boating on the Chatooga reveals a problem. If the USFS refuses to reconsider the present alternatives, my preference is for no less than option 6.

Sincerely,

Chris Hellmann
310 hampton ct
Lexington, KY 40508
chrishellmann@alltel.net



"James H. Bradley II"
<jbradley@ellijay.com>

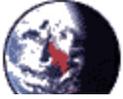
09/12/2007 04:02 PM

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

As an avid outdoorsman, I feel and believe it would be in the best interest of the Upper Chattooga to leave as is (Maintain current management, foot travel only and no boating above the Hwy 28 bridge).

The upper section of the Chattooga should never be opened for easy public access and this includes boating.

James Bradley
Ellijay, GA
(706) 635-5472



seankennedy05@comcast.net

09/12/2007 04:01 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: the headwaters issue

Mr Cleaves,

I am writing this letter in response to the 6 alternatives that have been outlined for possible management of the Chattooga River Headwaters. First of all, as many others have mentioned, I am absolutely appalled at the six alternative plans. These plans do nothing positive and only force user groups to be at odds with one another. The issue should not be "us versus them", but what is good for the river...isn't that the overall concern? Therefore even allowing the current status quo as an option (at least for anyone who has seen the river corridor) is, or should be, offensive to anyone that cares anything about the river and surrounding forestland.

The current system has many flaws, and I can't support any of the alternatives as you have outlined them.

One question I have is

why is there a ban on boating in the first place? Some have mentioned its a wild and scenic river, and a wilderness experience and that paddling is intrusive into wilderness...however, the following list is most if not all of the rivers under wild and scenic protection in the southeast Unites States.

The Chattooga- NC, SC, GA

The Sipsey- AL

The Obed- TN

The Horsepasture- NC

Wilson Creek- NC

The New- NC

Lumber River - NC

It is my understanding that all of the rivers with the exception of the Chattooga allow boating as an unrestricted use, with possibly the exception of the Horsepasture which I understand has some local access issues, however I believe it is legal to actually float it.

If kayaking is a threat to wilderness...then why does every other Wild and Scenic River in the southeast allow it? It is my understanding as well, that these rivers allow fishing and there does not seem to be any issues whatsoever regarding the two user groups having regular and conflicting "run ins"

I am a fisherman, I kayak as well, that is one reason I can't quite seem to come to terms with the way the two user groups have attacked one another regarding this issue. As someone that does both I can attest to the concerns of both groups...but that is not what the underlying issue should be.

Regardless what user groups are allowed in the river corridor, the river corridor has a user capacity, that once met...all users should be restricted. I can't quite see the logic in allowing one

low impact user group favorable access over another (in this case as much as I hate to admit it, we fishermen do tend to leave more trash...I may get flamed for saying that publicly, but in my experience that is what I have seen). So..in this case the less harmful user group is the one being banned while the arguments for banning them has been that they will damage the ecosystem. If this argument were true...then we fishermen better be careful because soon that argument will be used to ban us from the river as well.

This river is located in a National Forest, it the right of the citizens to use this resource unless their use is directly harming the area. Neither trout fishing or kayaking day trips do all that much impact...the real impact comes from campers that don't practice minimal impact, leave no trace ethics.

With this said, out of the six alternatives, I can only support No. 6, but it is with great reservation that I do so as this option does allow for equal access, but not enough protection or responsible land management practices.

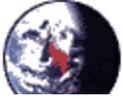
Keep motorized users out of wilderness, restrict overnight camping to a limited permit only system, Do Not Allow cutting of living vegetation, do not allow fire rings or fires AT ALL in the backcountry like in designated wilderness such as Shining Rock, NC, Linville Gorge, NC, Highlands, VA, etc.....

Allow traditional uses such as fishing, paddling and all other low impact uses that are allowed in every other national forest system and wild and scenic river. In short...

DO WHAT IS RIGHT AND END THE ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION AGAINST BOATERS IN THE HEADWATERS.

Thanks for considering our opinions.

Sean Kennedy
504 Stone Rd
Knoxville, TN



Dan.Peschio@upmraflat
ac.com

09/12/2007 04:01 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Chatooga Headwaters - I favor alternative #6

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I favor alternative #6, allowing boating on the upper sections of the Chatooga river. All other alternatives put forth on the management plan for the Upper Chatooga are unacceptable and show a blatant bias towards one user group over others. If the management plan is to have any legitimacy, all user groups must be represented equally and without favoritism.

Many of the comments against boating do not take into account some basic facts:

Paddlers are so passionate about access to this section of river not out of some gonzo, adrenaline junky drive, but because they have a deep respect and appreciation for this unique gem. They hail from all levels of education and economic backgrounds. They are not a drunken hoard of hairy, unwashed barbarians descending on your sanctuary to menace the women and children.

Paddling is one of the lowest impact vehicles by which to experience this area

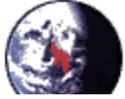
Boaters with the skills required to paddle this section of river are expert level paddlers with years of experience. Many have Wilderness First Responder training as well as Swift Water Rescue skills. Boat control and the ability of a group to exercise good judgment, and failing that, self rescue, is a given.

90% of the time this section of water will flow at levels high enough for paddling, the weather will be such crap that the chances for encountering other user groups will be minimal.

I have confidence that you will preserve this wild and scenic gem for future generations while allowing this generation the most broad cross-section of low-impact access.

Thank you for your time

Dan Peschio
65 tremont Street
Asheville, NC
28806



"Zierke, Eric C [FPM]"
<ezierke@iastate.edu>

09/12/2007 04:12 PM

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

Francis,

Hello, I am a forty-five year old boater from Iowa and I am having a hard time understanding why part of the Chattooga river is off limits to boaters. Please have someone contact me and explain this. Thank You.

Eric Zierke
Box 109 S Wisconsin
Hubbard, Iowa 50122

ezierke@iastate.edu



"Mark Singleton"
<mark@amwhitewater.org>

09/12/2007 04:15 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga Comments - please post attachments

John,

Please post Chattooga comments that have been sent as email attachments to the USFS web site. A number of thoughtful letters are missing from the public record (represented only as icons on the comments page, <http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/fms/forest/projects/chatcomments.shtml>).

Thank you,

Mark Singleton
Executive Director
American Whitewater
PO Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723
mark@amwhitewater.org
828.586.1930 (o)
828.508.1726 (c)
828.586.2840 (f)

Join or donate today!

<https://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Participate/>



"Steve Land"
<lotus1013@hotmail.co
m>

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

09/12/2007 04:16 PM

I am writing to express my position on the access ban to the Chattooga Headwaters. This issue is of great concern in that it not only affects access to this precious resource, but inevitably will factor in access decisions in other areas and rivers. The concerns expressed over the effects of boater related use of this area are not valid and without merit. The boating population is observant of and principally governed by an ethic which emphasizes the protection of natural places. We are proactive in our efforts to conserve and maintain our precious natural resources as evidenced by our group advocacy efforts as well as individual behavior which I have witnessed on the countless river days I have shared with other boaters from almost every state across this country. An impassioned argument is without merit unless action can prove out ones sentiment. It is my belief that the boating communities actions speak of our passion as evidenced by the proactive nature and efforts of organizations like American Whitewater in the protection of rivers. I urge you to allow boaters access to the Headwaters as it will facilitate the birth of countless stewards of this river.

Stephen M. Land MS, LPC

More photos; more messages; more whatever. Windows Live Hotmail - NOW with 5GB storage.
http://imagine-windowslive.com/hotmail/?locale=en-us&ocid=TXT_TAGHM_migration_HM_mini_5G_0907



Shad Slocum
<shadslocum@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 04:24 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: comments on alternatives on boating above Hwy 28 bridge

As trout fisherman, hunter, wilderness enthusiast, my solitude time in nature is becoming more and more precious every passing year. The Upper Chattooga is a unique area for this. I don't want the noise and distraction that boating will bring to this area. If I wanted to be at a theme park, I would go to Six Flags. I support alternatives 1,2,or 3 of the proposals listed.

Thanks for allowing us to respond.

Shad T. Slocum

Shape Yahoo! in your own image. Join our Network Research Panel today!
http://surveylink.yahoo.com/gmrs/yahoo_panel_invite.asp?a=7



"Mike Fentress"
<mike@appliedlasersllc.com>

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

09/12/2007 04:27 PM
Please respond to mike

Hi,

I am a professional engineer, small business owner, and long-time whitewater kayaker. I support lifting the ban against whitewater kayakers on the headwaters of the Chattooga River. There is no suitable argument against boaters.

Sincerely,

Mike Fentress
Mechanical Engineer

Applied Lasers
2565 Cloverdale Ave. Unit J
Concord, CA 94518
mike@appliedlasersllc.com
925-671-9785
925-356-2686 fax

Home:

P.O. Box 852
Lotus, CA 95651



"Holmes, Kenneth"
<ken@theholmescompany.com>

09/12/2007 04:32 PM

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

Mr. Cleeves,

Having reviewed the 6 proposals I must say that only number 6 has equal access to the area for all people and also considers impact on the area from all users and has registration for all users. Thus, it is the only fair proposal.

I was raised in Oconee County and still live in SC. I visit the Chattooga often and for various reasons. I could be said to be in several of the user groups involved in this discussion. And I have two young boys who I am trying to raise to love the outdoors as much as I, and who I hope to take to the Chattooga area for years. It is my opinion that their choices in the way they want to enjoy this area should not be limited, as long as what they do is not harmful to the environment. Limiting group size or camping areas or parking is fair to all. But limiting what non-harmful recreational activity can be chosen is not fair.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ken Holmes
Chapin, SC



"stewartbarlow@aol.co
m barlow"
<stewartbarlow

09/12/2007 04:35 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: chattooga river access

Mr Cleeves,

Hello, i am writing to express my concern for the up coming ruling on whether-or-not to continue the ban on whitewater kayaking on the upper section of the Chattooga river. I am currently living in Salt Lake City Utah finishing up school, so while i might not have the vested interest as some of the locals do, i do feel i can offer some outside evidence in support of allowing kayakers on the fragile ecosystem of the Chattooga.

Utah is famous for many things and foremost among them is our incredible backcountry. Nearly all of southern Utah is a fragile desert environment littered with seasonal creeks, magnificent rock formations and plant and animal life. During the spring there are a few creeks that spring up through the desert; the escalante, the dirty devil, the san refeal and muddy creek are some of the more famous. All of these rivers run through the extremely sensitive area, and are boated by kayakers nearly every time they have water. While the use has some impact on the environment, those that use the area here consider sacred and work to keep it free of signs of use, minimizing the signs of use.

Please consider that if the fragile environment of the utah deserts can support the moderate use from kayakers without negatively impacting the solitary feel and untouched look of the place, then so can the area of the upper chattooga.

A compromise can be obtained that allows all non-motorized users a chance to find themselves in the special place of the head waters of the Chattooga, without adversely affecting the place. Permits for the river, or even limitations of the number of user days are all possible solutions that i am sure you are already aware of.

Thank you for you time in reading and considering my opinons. please feel free to contact me for any further information.

thank you again,

Stewart Barlow
SLC, UT



"Robin Hitch"
<rhitch@email.wcu.edu
>

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

09/12/2007 04:55 PM

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,

I have been backpacking and hiking in the Sumter National Forest and swimming in the Chattooga River since 1986 and I know I even took part in the only study previously taken there. I believe I even answered the questions about other users as having no problem with encountering people engaging in different activities than me. Seeing boaters and fisherman on or near the river has never been a problem for me or the people I hike/backpack with. In fact I have enjoyed numerous occasions watching boaters and talking to fishermen. Why it has become an issue of fishermen or boaters is beyond me. They can and do use the same rivers all over the country. Not to mention that swimmers would be taken out by a boater is absurd.

I feel that a river that is sanctioned a Wild and Scenic River by its very nature **should allow** boating and believe it is against the concept of the designation of a Wild and Scenic River to ban boating on the Chattooga River.

I would like you to suggest some changes to the options proposed by the USFS in connection with the Chattooga River. These changes could better protect the river and possibly exceed in protecting it.

- Limits should only be imposed if standards are exceeded.
- The alternatives should include standards for ALL users.
- If limits are put into place they should be applied to all users and not just target a specific group.
- These alternatives should distinguish between high use areas and backcountry use. Since the USFS alternative makes no distinction between how many encounters with other users are acceptable in the campground or trailhead as opposed to on the trails or in the woods.

I also have concerns that these 6 alternatives do not include any provisions about abating the stocking of non-native species.

I would like to suggest a plan that would legalize boating with no other restrictions other than those imposed on other users be implemented. That all users self register and that the

USFS use the data acquired from this self registration to enhance future management plans.
Please open the Upper Chattooga for boating and allow it to be a remote wilderness
experience for any and all who want to enjoy the area.

Thank you for your time
Robin Hitch
PO Box 905
Cullowhee NC 28723
828-631-0303

Robin Hitch
Computer Consultant
Hunter Library Room 270
Western Carolina University
176 Central Drive
Cullowhee NC 28723
828.227.2210



"David Leachman"
<david@carmansite.com>

09/12/2007 04:57 PM

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

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I am writing you in regards to the Chattooga Headwaters. I feel that kayaking is a low impact sport and should be allowed on the Upper Chattooga Headwaters. I also feel that kayakers in general are very concerned with the environment and would certainly not leave behind trash. Kayakers are very concerned about water quality because kayakers are constantly in water and we want it to be clean and free of any foreign objects. I do not feel that allowing kayaking on the Upper Chattooga will increase the chances of activists trying to get ATV riders access to the hiking trails. I have backpacked. I have ridden mountain bikes. I have ridden ATV's, I have fished mountain streams and I have kayaked many of Kentucky's, Tennessee's, North Carolina's and Georgia streams. In my opinion riding in kayaks on the river along it's banks and not on the ground is about as low as an impact as the environment can get.

I do not feel that kayakers should be banned from paddling the Upper Chattooga Headwaters. Limited maybe, but not banned.

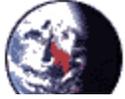
Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Take care,
David Leachman
Landscape Architect

David C. Leachman



310 Old Vine Street
Lexington, Kentucky 40507
859.254.9803 office
859.255.8625 fax
david@carmansite.com
www.carmansite.com



"Ryan Sherby"
<ryan@regiona.org>

09/12/2007 04:58 PM

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

I am in favor of Alternative 6, out of the alternatives.

Ryan Sherby
RPO Planner
Southwest Commission - Region A
125 Bonnie Lane
Sylva, NC 28779
(828) 586-1962 x214
www.regiona.org



"SMITH, JOSH"
<SMITHJO@mailbox.sc.edu>

09/12/2007 05:04 PM

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



Please see attached document [Comments Regarding USFS Management of the Chattooga River Corridor.doc](#)

COMMENTS REGARDING USFS MANAGEMENT OF THE CHATTOOGA RIVER CORRIDOR

Specifically, in regards to the six alternatives proposed for the new management plan I am happy to see boating access to the Headwaters is contemplated in at least half of them. While this is a step forward, it also must be recognized what a minor and unfortunately reluctant step it is. Boating access is only considered in half of the alternatives, and only alternative six proposes truly open access. The flow restrictions as well as the group restrictions may be necessary and I do not have a problem with restricting usage in order to protect the area. The USFS must recognize two things, first these restrictions must be justified and explained. The explanations previously given over the years have fallen substantially short of viable and justified reasons for a boating restriction. Secondly, if the USFS wishes to implement a plan in which boaters are restricted to both group sizes and numbers of groups who may access the river per day, then such restrictions must be adequately explained. Specifically, to single out a recreational usage for restriction while not imposing such limits upon other recreational usages of the same type is simply not allowed under the applicable laws. According to USFS regulations boating is a “primitive” recreational usage and as such primitive users must be similarly restricted if no reason can be articulated for only restricting boaters.¹

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act mandates that the USFS (as the managing agency) protects and enhances the ORVs for which the river was designated.² In order to analyze whether management of the resource violates the statute, the ORVs which afforded the river wild and scenic status becomes the primary inquiry. As for the Chattooga, the legislative history readily answers the question. During the consideration phase of the river a Senate report evaluated the headwaters; “this segment should only be negotiated in rafts with experienced guides and boatmen.... While rafting this segment is difficult, it is about the *only way* to see this portion of the river since rugged terrain makes access for hikers almost

¹ Forest Service Manual Title 2300—Recreation, Wilderness, and related Resource Management Sec. 2320.5(3) (Hand powered floating is a form of mechanical transport, but one which is “primitive) “Mechanical Transport. Any contrivance for moving people or material in or over land, water, or air, having moving parts that provides mechanical advantage to the user...It does not include...rafts, canoes...or similar primitive devices.”

² Section 10(a) mandates “[e]ach component...shall be administered in such a manner as to protect and enhance the values which caused it to be included in said system, insofar as is consistent therewith, limiting other uses that do not substantially interfere with public use and enjoyment of these

impossible.”⁶⁶ Also, the 1971 study conducted by the USFS that recommended Congress include all sections of the River based in large part on the availability of floating opportunities: “Floating activities...are very compatible uses for the river because these activities can capitalize on whitewater and scenic qualities that it possesses. By the nature of the activity, little damage, in comparison to other compatible uses will be anticipated...”.The same study noted that “[Portions of the Headwaters] can be floated only in rubber rafts...Rafting or some method of floating is the best way to see this rugged portion of this river.”³

Please consider these comments and more importantly, be mindful of the wilderness laws which USFS must abide by in the management of these pristine public lands.

Cordially,

Joseph Smith
408 E. Seven Oaks Dr.
Greenville, SC 29605

³ USDA Forest Service, *Chattooga River as a Wild and Scenic River (1971)*.



mroblivious mroblivious
<mroblivious_@hotmail.
com>

09/12/2007 05:10 PM

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

I am obviously writing you an email about the Chattooga Headwaters.

Isn't the logical choice obvious to all involved? When I was a child my parents had this rule that we kids had to abide by. It was called sharing.

Option #6 is obviously the fairest and most balanced option because it's the last one on your list.

A even more obvious choice would be Option #7. What is Option #7 you ask? Option #7 would be to stop the obvious stocking this section of this "Wild and Scenic River" with non-natural species of fish, to allow all of the citizens of this country access to one of their sections of NATIONAL FOREST, and for the "fisherman" to learn to co-habitate with other outdoor enthusiasts. It is certainly obvious that they think that they "own" this section of river and much like a child that doesn't know how to share his/her toys, they are obviously in the wrong and only self serving in their interests. Has any one paddler, group of paddlers or paddling advocacy group suggested that this section of Wild and Scenic River be closed to fisherman? I highly doubt it.

Sincerely,
Mr. Obvious.

Gear up for Halo® 3 and get a \$25 Best Buy gift card. It's our way of saying thanks for using Windows Live™. [Get it now!](#)



Margaret Weise
<margweise@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 05:15 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Upper Chattooga Boater Access Support

September 12, 2007
Christian Hills Dr
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

1352

Mr. John Cleaves
US Forest Service
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212

Dear Forest Service decision makers:

I have reviewed the Decision for Appeal #04-13-00-0026 American Whitewater of the Sumter National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan Revision by Gloria Manning dated 4/28/05.

I strongly agree with her ruling and I do not understand what has stopped this ruling enforcement.

As per the discussion stated in the ruling:

“The Regional Forester based his decision to continue the ban on non-commercial boating above Highway 28 on likely impacts that would result from lifting the ban. These include impacts to social and physical resources anticipated by the **introduction of a new user group** (referring to hard boaters)...” I do not see hard boaters as an introduction of a new user group. I see it as a group that has been banned and would like to have the same access as the fisherman and hikers do. Hard boaters are Americans too and are no different than fisherman and hikers. We all have the same skin and hard boaters would not have any further impact to the resources than the hikers and fishermen. I see this as a discrimination factor and limiting resources to a select type of individuals. This limitation of boaters is singling out one group of wilderness loving, human powered, low impact recreation users.

Also stated in the ruling:

“**No capacity analysis is provided to support restrictions or a ban on recreation use or any type of recreation user.** While there are multiple references in the record to resource impacts and decreasing solitude, **these concerns apply to all users and do not provide the basis for excluding boaters without any limits on the other users**”. I strongly agree with this statement.

I have also reviewed the Alternatives proposed by Jerome Thomas Forest Supervisor dated

August 14, 2007 File Code: 1920-2.

I wish to voice my strong objections to Alternatives 1, 2, & 3 which would continue the discrimination of boaters. I do feel this would lead to further lawsuits and a waste of everyone's monies that could be put to better use.

As a boater from Rochester Hills, Michigan – I also object to Alternatives to 4 and 5 which would allow boating but to a limited number of boaters per day. I would be devastated to have gone to great extents to plan my vacation to travel there and only to find out that I am the next person over the limit and be stopped. I do travel extensively for my paddling. I am a regular boater on the Talluah gorge for the last three years spring and fall. I also paddle on the Chattooga Section III and IV. If the number of boaters is restricted, then I only feel that the number of other recreational users also be restricted, such as fisherman and hikers.

I DO support Alternative #6. This alternative does permit fair user access to all recreational users. I see this as the best way to protect the Upper Chattooga and return it to a management plant that is consistent with the Wilderness Act and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

In summary:

Whitewater paddlers have as much right as a fishermen, hiker and wildlife watchers to enjoy the Upper Chattooga. Please rule in favor of Alternative #6.

Sincerely,
Margaret Weise

Got a little couch potato?
Check out fun [summer activities for kids.](#)



Ben Waller
<resq3man@yahoo.com
>

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Chattooga headwaters scoping document alternatives

09/12/2007 05:23 PM

Mr. Cleeves,

The purpose of this communication is to comment on the six alternatives in the Scoping Document regarding the future of access to the Chattooga River headwaters area.

Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 are completely unacceptable. These options do not allow boater access to the headwaters, which violates the spirit of the Wilderness Act and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, violates the intent of the Forest Service Chief's directive that indicated that there is no basis in law or in fact to ban boating on the Chattooga headwaters. Implementing any of these Alternatives will continue the unfair and unfounded boater ban that has prevented boaters from enjoying this outstanding natural resource for over three decades.

Selection of any Alternative that bans boating will open the door for re-instatement of the American Whitewater lawsuit, since the previous dismissal of that lawsuit was based on a technicality. In fact, it is probably that other groups and even some individuals will file additional lawsuits against the Forest Service if any of the above Alternatives are implemented. This will tie up Forest Services resources and budget dollars that could be better spent in creating fair access to all non-motorized user groups that can legally access other Sections of the Chattooga corridor. This waste of taxpayer funds and Forest Service time, effort, and attention could be prevented by implementing a truly fair and unbiased access plan for the headwaters.

Alternatives 4 and 5 are also unacceptable. These alternatives artificially limit boater access, group size, and users-per-day. No other user group has any similar access, group size, or user-per-day restriction. These limits are completely biased and unfair. These Alternatives allow unfettered access by other user groups who have created 100% of the negative impacts on the headwaters and environs, since boaters are not allowed there. Implementation of either of these Alternatives would likely result in the same legal actions against the Forest Service that will result from implementing Alternative 1, 2, or 3.

Alternative 6 is not completely acceptable, as it is still biased against boater access. However, this Alternative is closer to being acceptable than the other five Alternatives. Alternative 6 artificially restricts boat type to single-occupant boats. There is a wide variety of two-person boats (tandem canoes and tandem decked canoes, for example) that can safely navigate the Chattooga headwaters with little or no negative impacts. Restricting the headwaters to single-occupant boats is short-sighted, biased, and unfair. I have no problem with prohibiting commercial boating access above the Highway 28 bridge, but limiting the number of craft and requiring single-occupant boats is not based on any kind of factual finding. This restriction falls directly into the "arbitrary and capricious" category upon which successful legal actions are so often founded.

I also find many of the anti-boating comments posted on the Sumter National Forest site to be unfounded, biased, speculative, or downright untruths. Boaters have far less impact upon sensitive riparian environments than do land-based users. Hikers, fishermen, campers, recreational swimmers, and other users have far more impacts upon wildlife than boaters. Those user groups cause widespread erosion throughout the headwaters area, they have a long track record of leaving lots of trash, fishing line, hooks, bait cups, etc. over virtually the entire headwaters area. Additionally, recreational swimmers cause lots of localized noise pollution in the popular swimming holes.

This decision should be based on hard scientific fact, not upon the specious biases of some of the currently-permitted user groups. For example, there is far more boater-swimmer interaction at Bull Sluice than there would be at any point on a maximum-use day in the headwaters, yet there is not a single documented case of a boater-swimmer collision. Boater-angler interaction will be minimal, since ideal

boating conditions will only occur approximately 20 to 30 days per year. Anglers will have uninterrupted access for over 300 days per year, even in years with extraordinary rain conditions.

In conclusion, I am in support of a modified version of Alternative 6. This Alternative should be modified to eliminate the single-occupant boat restriction, the boating party size restriction, and the total number of boaters per day restriction.

Alternatives that impose restrictions on boaters or that ban boating completely while allowing unrestricted access to hikers, campers, anglers, recreational swimmers, and other land-based user groups are simply not acceptable.

I'm tired of my tax dollars providing a publicly-funded private playground for a privileged few, and it's time to stop the practices that create this situation.

I urge you to choose an Alternative that allows fair access to the Chattooga headwaters. If you modify Alternative 6 as recommended above, and adopt it with those modifications, I would support that action.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Waller

Bluffton, SC

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jv@CLEMSON.EDU
09/12/2007 05:51 PM

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

Subject: Chattooga Headwaters Management Plan Comment

Mr. John Cleeves
Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212-3530

Dear Sir,

I would like to comment on the recently released management plans for the headwaters of the Chattooga River. I, begrudgingly, am in favor of plan #6.

Why do I say "begrudgingly"? The plans you have laid out seem to completely rely on feedback from the "Chattooga, July 14th Workshop" in Walhalla SC, and little else. It seems that whichever group packed the meeting with the most supporters dictated the content of your "management plan options."
There doesn't seem to be any option based on previous public comments or the boating study.

Options 4-6, where boating is allowed but restricted, seem purely arbitrary. Not based on the science from the boating study above highway 28. If there is an option to restrict and "zone" the boaters, why isn't there an option to restrict and "zone" the other users? Boating the headwaters would have significantly less environmental impact than the current groups allowed in the wilderness area. Yet boating is heavily restricted or denied in all but one option. This isn't only unfair, it's illegal.

Nothing seems to be included from previous meetings or public input periods. There have been plenty of concerns about restricting overall access with limited parking, closing roads and bridges, stopping the stocking of non-native aquatic species in the river etc.... yet, these issues have not been addressed.

There is absolutely no option that combines both fishing interests AND boating interests. As if they can't coexist. They are not mutually exclusive. An option that would unite both groups would obviously benefit the future protection of the upper Chattooga. Why have you divided the two groups in different management options instead of uniting them??

The management plan I would like to see for the Chattooga headwaters would legalize boating above highway 28 with no more restrictions than are imposed on other user groups. Permit and reasonably limit all user groups, to limit encounters and collect hard data for tweaking the management plan in the future. Only allow woody debris removal in rapids where it might endanger the life of a boater. Stop the stocking of non-native aquatic species. Close all but Forest Service sanctioned trails. Restrict camping areas.

Rehabilitate trampled areas. Move the Burrels Ford parking area at least ½ mile away from the bridge. In short, let the Upper Chattooga become a more remote wilderness experience without denying any environmentally friendly user group the opportunity to enjoy the area.

The final management plan decision should not be left up to whichever user group can stuff the ballot box. Without a reasonable management option that addresses all user groups fairly instead of dividing them between management options I feel the Forest Service has failed in its task. You need to reconsider the final management plan for the headwaters of the Chattooga, set your bias against boating aside and come up with a plan that is fair and equitable for ALL user groups AND protects the Chattooga for the future.

I would rather see all roads, trails, and bridges closed, and ban all human activity in the Upper Chattooga then see one environmentally friendly user group denied access.

Sincerely,

Joey Manson
597 Silver Creek Road
Central SC 29630



"Dr. Gary Grossman"
<gdgrossman@gmail.com>
m>

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

09/12/2007 05:51 PM

To: Mr. J. Cleeves
Francis Marion & Sumpter National Forest

Re: Upper Chattooga Plan

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I would like to comment on the management alternatives proposed for the upper Chattooga River. In my opinion, I would like to see Option 1 implemented because I believe that it best preserves the esthetic, recreational, and biophysical characteristics of the watershed consistent with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Wilderness area at Ellicot Rock. Although Options 2 & 3 are acceptable options they are not as consistent with the values of the aforementioned acts as Option 1. In my opinion, Options 4-6 simply are not consistent with maintenance of the esthetic and recreational values experienced by the users of today, and also will result in biophysical degradation of the habitat unless many more rangers are employed to provide a consistent law enforcement presence.

At the LAC meeting in Walhalla, virtually every user group with the exception of boaters felt that the addition of boaters to the Upper Chattooga would negatively impact their experiences in the area. This involved birders, hikers, fishers and private property owners in the watershed. In addition, it is my belief that certain activities have such a negative impact on each other as to be mutually exclusive and I would classify fishing and boating in the Upper Chattooga in that group. Recreational zoning is a valid resource management tool and has been employed by the USDA Forest Service in other areas. Although, I simply do not understand why the boating community seems to believe that they have the right to boat every piece of water in existence regardless of the consequences on other users, it is clear to me that they would like to do away with this management tool, especially where it restricts their access to water. From watching the activities of American Whitewater it is clear that removal of the Chattooga boating restriction is a holy grail for them, with little thought or concern for its impact on others. These views are of particular concern because of the advent of boating practices such as Extra Low Flow boating which would put boaters and fishers in direct contact on a significant number of occasions. I find the argument that there would be little overlap by user groups to be specious, and unsupported by any data other than the wishful opinions of some AW members/officers.

It is unfortunate that my own experiences with white-water boaters in N. Georgia Rivers while fishing have been completely negative. Whether this is due to ignorance or lack of concern I cannot say, but they have been negative nonetheless. For example, while fishing I have had kayakers paddle right through the very spot that I was obviously fishing, have almost been knocked over by boaters on several occasions, and even when approached from a distance, have had to stop fishing because I could have potentially hooked them with a cast. In my experience, which is admittedly limited, there seems to little concern among boaters for "sharing" the river

with fishers. Although no user group should be condemned out of hand, my experience with the boating community on the Chattooga issue has been profoundly negative. One only needs to search the archives at whitewater bulletin boards such as Boater Talk to see multiple instances of boaters bragging about breaking the law and poaching runs on the upper Chattooga. In addition, posts by fishers on that forum have been greeted with ridicule and even curses. I began my involvement with this issue thinking that some sort of compromise would be good for both sides, but my experiences with boaters and at least one officer of AW have led me to believe that having boaters and fishers together on this river will only lead to potentially serious mishaps.

Although I write as a private citizen, I am also an expert on the ecology of stream fishes and have published papers on the ecology and management of these species on multiple continents. I have published over 85 papers in international refereed scientific journals on fish ecology/management and similar topics and my research can be viewed at www.arches.uga.edu/~grossman. One of the more troubling aspects of my experiences with the boating community and AW in particular is how they have twisted the scientific literature, or have selectively pruned it to imply that there are no data supporting any view point other than their own, i.e., that boating will have no biological or social impact on the environment or other users. American Whitewater has repeatedly claimed that there is no evidence that boating negatively affects streams or fish populations, but what they do not say is that there are no published studies in the scientific literature to either support or deny this point of view. By phrasing their comment as "there is no evidence", they certainly imply that studies have been done that show no impacts, which is disingenuous at best and deceptive at worst.

A similar example exists regarding the recent comments by Dr. Steven L. Powers regarding the effects of woody debris removal. Dr. Powers concludes that there would be little effect if some coarse woody debris was removed from the Chattooga, because there is scant evidence for its importance in rivers such as the Chattooga. There are scant data on the effects of wood removal on rivers such as the Chattooga, but there are many articles concluding that coarse woody debris is important to both trout and non-game fishes in many habitats. In fact, Dr. Powers cites a number of papers but did not cite any that found positive relationships between trout and woody debris (e.g., Deschenes & Rodriguez 2007, Can. J. Fish. Aquatic. Sci.) nor does he cite the main review article on this subject by Dolloff & Warren (2003, Fish relationships with large wood in small streams, published in the American Fisheries Society Symposium "The ecology & management of wood in world rivers."). Just to quote from Dolloff & Warren "Wood is also important in creating refugia for fish and other aquatic species. Removing wood from streams typically results in loss of pool habitat and overall complexity as well as fewer and smaller individuals of both coldwater and warmwater fish species. The life histories of more than 85 species of fish have some association with large wood for cover, spawning (egg attachment, nest materials), and feeding."... Consequently, the effects of wood removal from the Chattooga may be far from benign to the fishes and other aquatic organisms. Frankly, it is this sort of selective argument from boaters that gives me the greatest concern about the future and fate of the upper Chattooga. There is much that is unknown regarding biological relationships in this unique environment, and it would be a mistake to change management practices in the upper Chattooga without demonstrating a lack of impacts if user groups are added. I recognize that the USDA Forest Service has said no further studies will be done, but I hope that this decision will be reconsidered.

Feel free to contact me via my web site or my office at UGA.

With best wishes,

Gary D. Grossman, PhD

--

Gary D. Grossman

Distinguished Research Professor - Animal Ecology
Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources
University of Georgia
Athens, GA, USA 30602

<http://www.arches.uga.edu/~grossman>

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Editorial Board - Ecology Freshwater Fish



"JT Allen"
<jallen01@twcny.rr.com
>

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

09/12/2007 06:11 PM

Hello,

My family and I live in northern New York state. It concerns us greatly that we can't boat (kayak) the headwaters of this fine river.

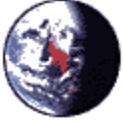
I have read a bunch of nonsense for this ban. We are not all a bunch of crazed lunatics bent on ruining this pristine area. We simply want the same rights to enjoyment that fishermen and hikers have. Our boats are absolutely non polluting. We leave less trace than a person walking. And if something fits in my boat on the way in it will also fit on the way out.

In order for me to travel that far to go boating I have to stay in the area. This means hotels and meals and gas and all the other things I need to buy while I am there. For at least 2 people.

We deserve the same treatment that others get as far as access is concerned. This ban on boating is unjust and needs to be repealed.

Thank you for your time.

John and Traci Allen
35934 CO. RT. 36
Carthage N.Y. 13619



David M Harris
<dmharris235@yahoo.com>

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Upper chattooga policy

09/12/2007 06:12 PM

Mr. John Cleeves
Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212-3530

Dear Sir,

I have been reading through many of the responses sent to you in relation to the current debate over the upper sections of the Chattooga. I am concerned to say the least in the amount of rampant ignorance of many people opining.

I have been a White Water enthusiast for the past twelve years. in that time I have traveled to and seen incredible places often only visitable by white water craft.

Being from a state that does not respect water quality or the preservation of wildest places let me say that I fully understand the concern of protecting this valuable wilderness area. If I thought that the introduction of white water craft to this area would cause any significant damage to it I would be one of the first to oppose it. My experience and knowledge allow to be sure that paddlers would not cause such a impact.

I and all of my companions have always had the utmost respect for making a low environmental impact as the beauty of these places is part of the reason we venture there.

It seems to me that those who would have the skill, ability, and intention of floating the upper sections of this particular reach are being lumped into a larger group which often involves commercialized rafting and water sports. Let me assure you we are not representative of that larger group.

We are a select group of elite paddlers that deeply love these areas. When I paddle I am there for the same reason that many of the hikers, fisherman, birdwatchers, and nature lovers in general.

In going to many of these secluded and isolated creeks that I enjoy I never see discarded paddling equipment or litter left behind by private non commercial paddlers. These areas are pristine. No trails along the bank. No erosion. No impact at all caused by the paddlers that float by.

To compare this group to ATV riders, snowmobiles, and infer that children may be harmed by this user group is fantasy and scare tactics beyond the wildest scope. These accusations in fact prove my point. We are being slandered and falsely discriminated against by others that do not understand us. They are ignorant of how we operate and jump to wildly unsubstantiated accusations and opinions in order to justify or exclusion from the wilderness area.

We protect these environments. I myself have and often seen fellow paddlers picking up litter found on the river and pack it out. I disgust me to see trash in these beautiful areas.

Please do not think of our small elite group as being the same as the larger basically unaffiliated group to whom we are being compared by those ignorant of the difference.

I thank you for your time and attention to my opinions.

With respect,

David Harris
Kent, Ohio

David Harris Photography
P.O. Box 114
Kent, Ohio 44240
330-289-9691
www.dmharrisphotography.com

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"Thomas Williams"
<whitewaterkayaker@g
mail.com>

09/12/2007 06:30 PM

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

Mr. Cleeves,

I believe that option #6 is the only acceptable option provided for the Chattooga Headwaters. While all of the other plans single out boaters over all other user groups, option #6 gives paddlers fair and equal treatment that is expected in our country. Furthermore, option #6 reflects the opportunities that are available in other streams across America; these same streams where user conflicts are not an issue.

I ask that you consider the limits mother nature has already set upon boaters. Without significant amounts of rain, the headwaters are impassible by kayakers. In drought conditions such as those experienced this past year, fisherman and swimmers would never encounter a kayaker on the river. On the other hand, during an extremely wet summer, one that is not favorable to fishermen and down right dangerous to swimmers, only a few of the top paddlers would have the ability be on the river. Not to mention that during the limited amount of time a paddler can be on the river, the ecological impact would be minimum. No lines or bait cans are needed, nearly the entirety of the run is spent floating on the water, and erosion is kept to a minimum as there is not a constant climbing on and off the banks.

I ask that you restore boating opportunities along the Chattooga river. From the pictures I have seen from the conservation study, the Chattooga is one of the most beautiful rivers in the southeast and I would love to one day be able to visit it in its entirety from my kayak - from the Headwaters to lake Tugaloo.

Thank you for considering the available options. Once again, I urge you to choose option #6 and re-open the Chattooga Headwaters to boating.

Thomas Williams
Greenville, NC



"Mark Stover"
<mntsport70@verizon.net>

09/12/2007 06:41 PM

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

Dear Mr Cleeves,

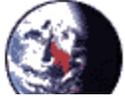
I am writing in regards to the Chattooga River management proposal concerning boating on the upper reaches of the Chattooga. Foremost, I am in support of Alternative #6 to allow boating.

This seems the only logical and reasonable alternative given the Chief of the USFS declaration regarding this matter. I do not understand at all how a non-motorized, human propelled user group (kayakers and canoeists) could be banned from enjoying this public land. This topic has been hashed and rehashed ad nauseum regarding user group conflict and paddler impact on the environment so I will not do so again. However I will briefly emphasize a few key facts. Whitewater paddlers of the caliber that will paddle the banned sections are not a threat to other user groups. These boaters are as a whole VERY conscious of low impact wilderness travel and leave no trace ethics. Furthermore, the relatively few days that these sections are watered enough for paddling are not going to be prime fishing days. It has been argued by fishermen that paddlers have plenty of other rivers and streams to boat so the ban should remain in place. The same can be argued for fishermen as well, they have just as many if not more rivers and streams to practice their chosen outdoor pursuit.

In summation, this should not be about appeasing user groups at the expense of other user groups but simply a case of upholding the law that allows boating in the currently banned sections. The rule of law is the simple solution to this problem.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark Stover
Weaverville, NC 28787



"Justin Bolender"
<jlboles@gmail.com>
09/12/2007 06:43 PM

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

See attached letter and below.

Thanks,
Justin Bolender

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,

I am a fisherman, a hiker, an environmental steward, a camper, a whitewater boater and a proud American. We all have the same writes to our public lands and water and I feel the boating ban on the Upper Chattooga is unconstitutional and down right absurd.

The six alternatives currently proposed by the USFS do not adequately allow boating on the entire river. Any 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 my opinion your decision makers must all be fisherman because your alternatives are biased towards that group. Whitewater boating does entirely less damage to the river corridor than wading and fishing. I would really love to plan a trip to the area and spend my money there for lodging, food, gas, etc than going somewhere else.

Please consider the following amendments to your alternatives:

- 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.

In all honesty the USFS has no right to ban boating on this river. The only argument that I keep hearing from the folks that are opposed to boating on the Upper Chattooga is that "Boaters already have the rest of the river." Well, you know what....so do the hikers and fishermen.

Thank you for considering these ideas.

Sincerely,

Justin Bolender

Civil Engineer

3050 Madison Road Apt. 3

Cincinnati, OH 45209



Chattooga Letter_JLB.doc

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,

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The six alternatives currently proposed by the USFS do not adequately allow boating on the entire river. Any 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 my opinion your decision makers must all be fishermen because your alternatives are biased towards that group. Whitewater boating does entirely less damage to the river corridor than wading and fishing. I would really love to plan a trip to the area and spend my money there for lodging, food, gas, etc than going somewhere else.

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Thank you for considering these ideas.

Sincerely,

Justin Bolender
Civil Engineer

3050 Madison Road Apt. 3
Cincinnati, OH 45209



"Saunders, Brian L
PWR"
<Brian.Saunders@pwr.u
tc.com>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Paddling Ban on the Upper Chattooga

09/12/2007 06:57 PM

Sir,

I am writing to express my support for paddling on the Upper Chattoga river. Preventing paddling on the Upper Chattoga, as the current ban does, is unfair and has no basis. I am aware that groups such as the "Friend of the Upper Chattoga" have lobbied to keep the ban in place. The comments made by these groups, such as paddlers leave trash in the wilderness, are unfounded. I have been paddling in the Southeastern United States for over ten years and have never witnessed any such incidents as described by these groups.

I believe that all users of the wilderness should have equal access rights. I do support limits on group sizes and access control to the Upper Chattoga as to not damage the wilderness. Please support removing the paddling ban from the Upper Chattoga.

Thank you,

Brian L. Saunders
123 Lauremill Drive
Harvest, AL 35749



RTryon1055@aol.com

09/12/2007 07:08 PM

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

cc:

Subject: Upper Chattooga River

Dear Mr. Cleeves:

I am writing in regard to the six preliminary alternatives developed for managing recreation uses on the upper Chattooga River. For the past several years I have fished the stretch of river above the Highway 28 Bridge and would really hate to see the area opened up to boating. I have nothing against paddlers. (I paddle, and have two kayaks and a canoe, but my experience is limited to flat water.) Such boating is already allowed on nearly two-thirds of the Chattooga River and on surrounding streams. The stretch above the Highway 28 Bridge is the only backcountry Forest Service stream in the Southeast that I know of limited to foot travel only, and this has preserved the solitude, remoteness, and wildness of the area. Allowing boating, however limited, into that upper portion of the Chattooga River will compromise these conditions.

In addition, I fear that allowing boating into the area will degrade the conditions that allow trout to flourish and those angling for trout will be unable to succeed in their quest. Most paddlers I know are very sensitive and concerned about the environment, but are not usually aware of what their passage on such a small stream does to wildlife and to those left behind fishing the stream. For instance, the routine clearing of branches and other natural debris to facilitate boat passage impacts the stream structure and, likely, the insect life on which trout depend. Also, it can be quite unsettling to an angler on a small stream to find a kayak bearing down upon him.

From the paddlers that I have talked to about the upper portion of the Chattooga, it seems a matter of principle that no part of any stream be denied to them. I favor keeping the management of the upper portion of the Chattooga River as it is, Alternative #1, so that the last refuge for those of us who seek the solitude and the wilderness conditions for trout fishing will be preserved.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Roy H. Tryon
346 South Stonehedge Drive
Columbia, SC 29210

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smithjsjs@aol.com

09/12/2007 07:17 PM

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

cc:

Subject: chattooga river access for whitewater

to whom it may concern,

I have had the privilege of enjoying southeastern whitewater for the past 16 years. something that is unique about the chattooga wilderness area is that it is one of the most peaceful wilderness areas in the southeast. because of the remoteness of this area traffic is often time limited. I enjoy flyfishing and kayaking and on many occasions i pack in fishing equipment to allow me to access sections of the river that are often times less traveled. I believe that my impact to the river while kayaking is less than that of a traditional fisherman. I do not trample wildlife and when I have passed through the river there is NO trace of my passing. to say that kayakers detract from our wilderness I ask you how Louis and Clark explored our country?

thank you for considering my opinion,

Please allow those who enjoy the outdoors the same privilege as others. I can appreciate if a group will create an environmental impact that will detract from future users, we should limit access.

thank you
Jeff smith
1214 chestnut street
kingsport tn
37664
423-963-0483

Email and AIM finally together. You've gotta check out free [AOL Mail!](#)



tim walsh
<tjwoutdoors@yahoo.com>
m>

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Lift the Boating Ban on the Chattooga!

09/12/2007 07:16 PM

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 limit 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.

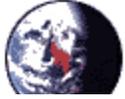
Thank you for considering these ideas.

Sincerely,

Tim Walsh
4 Brewster Rd.
Falls Village, CT
06031

Be a better Globetrotter. Get better travel answers from someone who knows.
Yahoo! Answers - Check it out.

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



"Don Kinser"
<Dkinser@ediltd.com>
09/12/2007 07:47 PM

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

Donald
E.
Kinser

1040
Chattooga
Ridge Road
Mountain
Rest, SC
29664
864.647.2014
Home
678.213.3546
Daytime
770.595.6789
Cell
S
e
p
t
e
m
b

er 12, 2007

VIA EMAIL: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

Mr. John Cleeves
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212-3530

Re: Official Comments on August 24, 2007 "NEPA Scoping Package"
File Code 1920-2

Upper Chattooga River Management

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I am a whitewater paddler, hiker, and angler and I have enjoyed the Chattooga River on many hundreds of occasions since 1980. I am a member of the Rabun TU chapter, the Georgia Canoeing Association and American Whitewater (AW). My wife and I own a home in Oconee County SC that borders the Wild and Scenic River corridor.

The upper Chattooga is a spectacularly beautiful and wonderful place to go and fish, hike and relax in a remote wilderness setting. It is in many ways a national treasure and a true jewel of the National Wild and Scenic River System. Many in the surrounding area enjoy this wonderful place.

The Chattooga is a decent, but not spectacular, cold water fishery made possible primarily by hatcheries and costly human intervention.

On the other hand, the Chattooga River is a *world class* whitewater river. I know first hand because of my river experiences around the world. For this reason I have chosen to live there. It is also why whitewater paddlers from across the country and around the world choose to visit the Chattooga River and why I have been working diligently to restore whitewater paddling access to the upper 21 miles, nearly half, of this National Wild & Scenic River since 1998.

The recently published report entitled "Capacity and Conflict on the Upper Chattooga River" clearly shows that paddling impacts would be negligible, expected paddling use will be low, and most importantly that the normal flow regime naturally segregates use. Furthermore the flow regime results in a very small number of days each year where whitewater boating is even feasible. In many ways, paddling is the best and lowest impact way to access this area. This was true in 1971 when the Chattooga Study Report declared when speaking of the Chattooga above Highway 28:

"Rafting or some method of floating is the best way to see this rugged portion of the river. Many of the pools and canyon-enclosed sections are 10-20 feet deep and impossible to wade by hikers and fishermen."

This is still true today and I can attest to this fact first hand. In January of this year I had the great honor and privilege of participating in the Expert Panel Flow Study on the upper river. What we found during those two days is a truly amazing whitewater resource. I just hope these two days of user trials are not the last opportunity I and others have to legally enjoy this magnificent place from my boat.

Despite the complete lack of scientific research and data to support their claim, some continue to maintain that their opposition to whitewater boating on the upper Chattooga is somehow "protecting" the resource from damage and over use. The final study report paints a different picture and boils the entire boating issue down to "social conflicts."

It seems that anglers on the Chattooga simply do not like whitewater boaters and therefore they think "zoning" boaters off parts of "their" river is a reasonable alternative. This is absurd and contrary to all USFS policies.

I fully support protecting the Chattooga River and I am hopeful that the FS will finally do something to manage use on the upper river other than to simply ban floating (which has little impact on the environment). A good start would be self issued permits for *all* users of the upper river corridor, including boaters.

You should eliminate stocking of non native exotic fish. This not only damages the natural ecosystem but actively *attracts* use. Here seems to be the Agency's perverse logic: The resource is over used and we need to limit visitation to protect the resource so let's stock exotic fish, build a camp ground and parking lot and ban boating.

You should enforce your *existing* regulations regarding campsites, user created trails,

litter, etc.

I want to emphasize here again, the indisputable fact, that the upper Chattooga's normal flow regime will naturally segregate anglers and paddlers in time and space. *We told you this for free in 2001.* All the data and research that you have now paid millions in tax payer dollars for fully affirms this. I challenge the FS to find a more eloquent, fair and implementable decision that to simply allow boating on the upper Chattooga and let nature take care of the rest. It works on every other headwater stream in the Southeast, and indeed across the country, and it will work on the upper Chattooga too!

Next I want to speak a little bit about collaboration. When AW first approached the local TU and angling interests in 1995 to explore and discuss a compromise solution we were flatly rejected. When I tried to reach out to them again in May 2001 and December 2005 the response was the same. This unwillingness to meet in good faith and reach a mutually acceptable solution continues to this day and confounds the process. This behavior has forced both AW and the USFS to spend millions as a result.

Since 1999 I have *invested well over a man-year of my time* working toward fair, equitable, and nationally consistent management of the Chattooga River. Your failure to listen to those of us who support floating use on the upper Chattooga and your smug coziness with the local anglers, land owners, and others who claim to "protect" the Chattooga by excluding boaters is appalling. Worse yet, your flawed process that arrived at the pathetic scoping document is inexcusable. So is the magnificent amount of money you have wasted. I only wish you had spent as much protecting the river as you have spent trying to protect a flawed and indefensible status quo

You have missed every deadline during this entire process. You have spent 29 months doing a "capacity" study yet you didn't arrive at a capacity for any use and certainly not for boating use. You only allowed boats on the river for 2 days in January under highly contrived and constrained conditions. You have no idea what the actual boating capacity for the Chattooga river might be.

For these reasons I support Alternative 6 of your scoping document. However I must qualify this and say that Alternative 6 is flawed in many ways as is the entire list of Alternatives presented in your scoping document. First all of the alternatives must treat boaters equally with other users unless you can present factual data to suggest impacts that would be greater from boaters. You can not show this with the data you have published.

Your Chief said this in his appeal decision:

"While there are multiple references in the record to resource impacts and decreasing solitude, these concerns apply to all users and do not provide the basis for excluding boaters without any limits on other users."

So which is it? Is the resource beyond its carrying capacity and, if so, what limits will

you place on all users of the corridor? None of your six alternatives limit any user except boaters so one must assume that you believe the resource is not beyond its carrying capacity. Since you don't know the total carrying capacity how can you say that adding boating use would exceed the river's capacity? You can not.

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The boating ban on the upper Chattooga River, now in place for over 30 years, is unfair. I also believe it is illegal and just plain wrong. It is well past time that the FS does the right thing and reaches a new decision that reverses the illegal and inequitable ban on floating the upper Chattooga River.

Sincerely,



Donald E. Kinser Don's scoping comment letter.pdf

Donald E. Kinser

1040 Chattooga Ridge Road
Mountain Rest, SC 29664

864.647.2014 Home
678.213.3546 Daytime
770.595.6789 Cell

September 12, 2007

VIA EMAIL: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

Mr. John Cleeves
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212-3530

Re: Official Comments on August 24, 2007 "NEPA Scoping Package"
File Code 1920-2
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Don Kinser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Donald E. Kinser



"jen@greenriverco.com"
<jen
09/12/2007 07:39 PM
Please respond to jen

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

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 6 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 the 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 should 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. It simply does not make sense that the user group with the least environmental impact on the WSR (based on the recent USFS studies conducted) is the only user-group being excluded and/or restricted in the proposed alternatives.

The 6 proposed alternatives contain decreasing amounts of conservation of the WSR as boating access is increased. The 6 alternatives appear to be making the statement that either the USFS can protect the WSR resource or allow boating, but not both. Clearly the 6 alternatives proposed are not based on the data collected. Boating does not require the USFS to maintain lengthy trails or to build pricey hatcheries to restock fish in the river. In fact, boating has the smallest user group, the least number of potential use days of the year and the smallest impact on the resource itself.

There are no legal or data-based reasons for denying or restricting private boating on the entire Chattooga River. However, there seems to be sufficient evidence to question how the USFS has been handling the land-based user groups since it appears that they are the groups destroying this beautiful resource, not the private boaters.

I believe the proposed alternatives should be amended as follows:

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

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

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Â· 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.

Â· No alternative looks at banning campfires either year round or seasonally. Damage to trees, most likely for firewood, was the best documented impact found in the User Capacity Study. Searching for firewood also adds to user created trails.

Â· Banning or limiting stocking of non-native fish was not included in any of the alternatives. Stocked Brown and Rainbow trout kill native brook trout and upset the natural balance of the river ecosystem. The highest human use (and therefore impact) happens as a result of the stocking of these non-native species.

Thank you for considering these ideas. As an user of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River (backpacking, camping, and boating) I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion and concern about how this beautiful resource will be restored and maintained.

Thank you,

Jennifer Watson
Asheville, NC



Eric Princen
<ericprincen@yahoo.com>

09/12/2007 08:02 PM

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: Kayaking the headwaters of the Chatooga

To whom it may concern,

It is my solemn opinion that boaters on the headwaters of the Chatooga represent a serious risk to the greater Chatooga area. I submit the following reasons for this.

1. The Chatooga is a beautiful area and the scenic value is diminished by the presence of kayakers. They are loud and tend to make a mess. Look at any river that is paddled and you will find a load of powerade bottles and schlitz cans.
2. The fact that many boaters get in over their heads in difficulty cause many injuries and would require federal assistance which the areas tax base can't afford.
3. Boaters are notorious for driving unsafely and also their beater cars tend to introduce many pollutants into the air which will lead to a continuing advance of global warming. As I already own a beach front cottage I fear that if global warming continues then my beach house may be underwater.
4. Boaters are also fond of marijuana and I think that given the area in which the headwaters are located would cause the boaters to think that they can smoke doobage too much. Also leading to global warming.
5. The smell of boaters is offensive even to themselves and if one of the boaters was to flip over the smell would drive the native trout away.

Eric

Need a vacation? [Get great deals to amazing places](#) on Yahoo! Travel.



marxer@comcast.net

09/12/2007 08:06 PM

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

cc:

Subject: Upper Chattooga Comments

In response to the six management alternatives for the Upper Chattooga, I strongly endorse alternative #1, to maintain current management. In my view, we must protect the few wild and scenic areas we have left. I have personally seen the disruption to the solitude that boaters have caused on the West Fork of the Chattooga, while I was enjoying a few hours fly fishing. Some boaters are not as respectful of the river environment as they should be. I am 74 years old and am introducing my grandchildren to fly fishing. I hope they can enjoy the Chattooga in the same way I have for so many years.

Hugo Edward Marxer
Atlanta, Georgia and Highlands, North Carolina



Kirk Eddlemon
<bankfull1@yahoo.com
>

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: illegal boating ban

09/12/2007 08:20 PM

Dear USFS officials,

I am an avid outdoor user, and find the most pristine wilderness areas to be those most worth visiting. The Chattooga is certainly one of these, with great water quality and unregulated streamflows. Whether floating/fishing/birding/hiking or participating in any other low impact use, I am ecstatic to be able to take in what the delicate Chattooga watershed has to offer, particularly in the upper reaches.

Boating has little to no negative impact on the environment when compared to hiking, fishing and other uses. These are also relatively low impact uses compared to ATV's and other motorized uses. Therefore this needs to be taken into consideration when pro-ban propaganda materializes about boaters increasing litter, noise, erosion, and overall detriment to the ecosystem/watershed. Boaters are a highly environmentally conscious group who try to limit intrusion to other users serenity, and practice leave no trace ethics to the highest degree.

The only people who's safety will EVER be affected by boaters is boaters themselves. The argument of swimmers/anglers/hikers getting hurt by boaters in the river is the most absurd idea and has absolutely NO basis in reality whatsoever. If people swim in the river at the levels whitewater boaters are there, then the only thing that will save these ill planned swimmers would be a kayaker, because to swim the river at levels boaters require is SUICIDE!!! The idea that boaters could jeopardize the safety of other users IS BOGUS. Finally, assuming that boaters don't pose a safety threat, and they have at least comparable impact (really lower impact) to the environment, then they should be allowed EQUAL access and opportunity to enjoy not only the Chattooga headwaters, but all stream in our national forests.

The non-boating public has a very warped view of the boating contingent who is interested in accessing the headwaters. Their information is not rooted in facts, data, truth, or experience, but only in ignorant and irrational fear. Please keep this in mind when weighing their statement's validity. Kayaking is LOW IMPACT, NOT INTRUSIVE, and NOT A SAFETY RISK TO THE PUBLIC.

The stewardship of boaters is above reproach, and if given the due right to experience the headwaters, boaters WILL organize cleanups, and will take the Chattooga river under their wing. We are an ally to this special place, and we don't have to live in Rabun, Transylvania, Jackson, or Oconee Counties to have a valid opinion. Many "local stewards" fought the Wild and Scenic designation to the bitter end, concerned that they wouldn't be able to spin their tires and leak oil into the river at various fords. They would also now have to actually walk to get to the river. Many "local stewards" are the SAME people destroying the headwaters region with golf courses and environmentally insensitive "summer homes". If anything is a destructive force upon the Chattooga then it's the town of Cashiers, Whiteside Cove, etc. I think the facts on how golf courses, second homes, and motorized vehicles affect the ecosystems of a watershed are clear and readily available. How can these same people preach environmental responsibility?

Anyone who knows the facts can only come to the conclusion that boating is an acceptable, low impact, non-intrusive method of enjoying the Chattooga and all other US rivers. That is why I know the best of the six alternatives is alternative #6. As far as input on future management, I am not sure of how to do it, but reduction of erosion due to trail overuse/non official trails, and combating the litter problem evident from current users are a few things that should be addressed.

Thanks for listening, and good luck.

Kirk Eddlemon
Geologist, Father, Husband, River Steward.

Be a better Heartthrob. [Get better relationship answers](#) from someone who knows.
Yahoo! Answers - Check it out.



"Ken Jones"
<kjones49@famview.com>

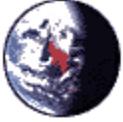
09/12/2007 08:28 PM

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

After a trip to Yellowstone National Park recently, I was in awe of how pristine the wilderness is and how lucky we are to have it available. I was very surprised to find out how far-sighted our leadership was in 1872 to realize that the area needed to be made into a national park, when much of the country was still wilderness. I am not saying that we should give the area national park status, but I am saying that we owe it to our heirs to keep the area as untouched as we can. If we want to make it a tourist attraction, let it be for backpacking, hiking and fishing.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

J. K. Jones, Jr.
3740 Six and Twenty Rd.
Pendleton, SC 29670



"Robert Lesko"
<rlesko@email.smith.edu>
u>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Boating/kayaking ban on the Chattooga

09/12/2007 08:32 PM

I strongly oppose the proposed boating ban on boating on the Chattooga. This sort of selective exclusion of any non motorized craft while allowing other uses such as hiking and fishing constitutes both deference to special interests and gives some sports an elitist status at the expense of others that deserve equal access. I would like to add that I am both a hiker and a fisherman. I am a member of AMC as well as American whitewater. I was for some time a member of Trout Unlimited but found that I could not continue to support their narrow agenda.

Bob Lesko
122 Pantry Road
PO Box 233
North Hatfield, Ma



**"Dennis and Colleen
Dodge"**
<dodge@taconic.net>

09/12/2007 08:42 PM

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

Open and free access to wild and scenic rivers should be the rule of the land in our country. White water paddlers appreciate the grandeur of the wilderness more than the average person. We will take care of the Chattooga headwaters as if it was our child. It will remain the beautiful pristine native area that has existed for eons. Please! Do not close off that resource to those of us that appreciate it the most!

Thank you, Dennis Dodge



"Richard Bowers"
<nwrivers@comcast.net
>

09/12/2007 08:52 PM

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

Richard Bowers
830 Reveille St., Bellingham, WA 98229
Nwrivers@comcast.net

By Email Transmission -- September 12, 2007

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 continuing attempt to lock-out boaters on the Upper Chattooga is not a regional issue but a national concern for all human-powered recreation users. The issue at stake on this section of river is not about appropriate use or protection of the resource, but decades of agency pandering to local interests trying to preserve their own private use. The Forest Service (USFS) should be working to bring users and other interests together, not alienating them.

Bringing people together has worked well on other wilderness rivers seeking to protect "outstanding natural, cultural, or recreational values." In fact, the most visible aspect of a healthy watershed is the abundance of fish and wildlife and other natural attributes, as well as the interest shown by those who care for these special places.

This is the case on rivers across the country; and it should be the case on the Upper Chattooga where the natural and wilderness resources could easily be complemented by anglers on the banks, hikers along the trails, and paddlers on the water. If restrictions are necessary to protect the area, these should be fair and equitable for all users.

In 1995, the USFS joined with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service to sign the Interagency Wild & Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council Charter (American Whitewater, Trout Unlimited, and other recreational organizations have been partners with this Council for many years). When you visit the website for this Council <http://www.rivers.gov/council.html> it supports the same broad understanding of recreational values listed above. ***"So, visit one of the***

many rivers that has been protected for you to enjoy. Grab a flyrod, load the kayak on the car, slip an oar in the water, or put on your most comfortable walking shoes. Get out there and savor your country's famous natural heritage. The purpose of the Council provides no exception for the Upper Chattooga and neither should the USFS!

Unfortunately, only one (alternative six) out of all of the alternatives proposed in the Scoping Document for the Upper Chattooga allows for this broad type of recreational diversity. And even this alternative requires substantial amendment because it is not supported by actual capacity data (from the USFS study), is not consistent with the USFS's appeal decision, and will not protect the Chattooga River. The capacity study demonstrated that boating is an appropriate use of the Upper Chattooga River (also specifically cited in the Wilderness Act as "outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of [non-motorized] recreation", yet five of six proposed alternatives ban boating on some or all of the upper river.

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.
- Limits should only be imposed when standards are met or exceeded.
- Alternatives must include a range of standards for *all users* and be based on a capacity for all users and/or individual uses.

Finally, both the Wilderness Act and the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act were designed, promoted and supported by human-powered outdoor users, including paddlers, anglers, hikers and others. As a long-time member and current Board Director with American Whitewater, I understand that this organization was founded in large part to protect wilderness rivers, and is currently working towards this goal across the country. For instance, American Whitewater is active in both the Mt. Hood Wilderness Proposal and the Platt River Wild and Scenic designation here in the Northwest, was and is deeply involved with the National Forest Roadless Area Rule, and was instrumental in permanently protecting Wilson Creek as Wild & Scenic in North Carolina. In each of these examples, anglers, hikers, climbers and boaters were able to coordinate goals and actions with other advocates to seek permanent protection for rivers.

It would be great if similar partnerships could be forged on the Upper Chattooga. However, this would require the USFS to take a lead on building alliances and mending decades of antagonism, rather than championing the unjustified and decade's old ban and limited use perspective on the Upper Chattooga.

Thank you for considering my ideas. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to legally enjoy and paddle the Upper Chattooga, along with others who hike, fish and climb in wilderness areas and along wild rivers. What a great event it would be, if, during the 40th Anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act (2008) the USFS would

embrace a broader view of participation and support for the Upper Chattooga.

Sincerely,

Richard Bowers



Chattooga Ltr. Bowers.doc

Richard Bowers
830 Reveille St., Bellingham, WA 98229
Nwrivers@comcast.net

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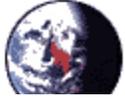
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Sincerely,

Richard Bowers



"Kelly J. Randall"
<krandall@charter.net>
09/12/2007 09:03 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: FW: Mail System Error - Returned Mail

I'll try again.....

-----Original Message-----

From: Mail Administrator Postmaster@charter.net [mailto:Mail Administrator Postmaster@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2007 8:54 PM
To: krandall@charter.net
Subject: Mail System Error - Returned Mail

This Message was undeliverable due to the following reason:

Your message was not delivered because the destination computer was not found. Carefully check that it was spelled correctly and try sending it again if there were any mistakes.

It is also possible that a network problem caused this situation, so if you are sure the address is correct you might want to try to send it again. If the problem continues, contact your friendly system administrator.

Host fs.fed not found.

The following recipients did not receive this message:

<southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed>

Please reply to Postmaster@charter.net if you feel this message to be in error.
Reporting-MTA: dns; mtai04.charter.net
Arrival-Date: Wed, 12 Sep 2007 20:53:32 -0400
Received-From-MTA: dns; aa04.charter.net (10.20.200.156)
Content-Type:

Final-Recipient: RFC822; <southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed>
Action: failed
Status: 5.1.2
Remote-MTA: dns; fs.fed

----- Message from "Kelly Randall" <krandall@charter.net> on Wed, 12 Sep 2007 20:54:54 -0400 -----

To: "us" <southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed>

Subject: FW: Chattooga

Hi! I am an avid outdoors person and a graduate Environmental Engineer in the State of Georgia. I fish the Chatooga river above the 28 bridge regularly.....particularly in the winter and spring....ie. higher water periods. I am strongly apposed to boating above the 28 bridge. Don't let this "wild and scenic " river become another Amicalola. Surely, some "wilderness streams" should be left to foot travel only.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Kelly J. Randall
5164 Shirley Road
Gainesville, Georgia, 30506

770-503-1364

-----Original Message-----

From: Georgia Foothills [mailto:newsletter@georgiafoothills.org]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2007 12:15 AM
To: Kelly Randall
Subject: COMMENTS NEEDED BY THURSDAY!

GA Foothills Members,

Per tonight's GA Foothills TU Chapter meeting, we agreed we needed to email this reminder to our membership. Please respond to this important issue on potential boating on the Upper Chattooga River above the Hwy. 28 bridge. The deadline for all comments is this Thursday. Once the ruling is made, there will be no turning back. The GA Foothills Chapter believes Alternatives 1-3 are in the best interest for all generations in the future. If boating is permitted, the last place for this quality of solitude will be lost and we may never recover from this if the current zoning is changed.

Please email your brief comments to this important issue to;
comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

Thanks for your support,

Brian Sandven
Chapter President
GA Foothills TU

=====

As a member of Georgia Trout Unlimited, please respond to the Forest Service's request concerning the North Fork of the Chattooga River.

The Forest Service has developed six preliminary management alternatives that cover a range of options for recreational use of the North Fork of the Upper Chattooga River upstream of the Highway 28 Bridge. In order for your comments to be considered, submit them by this Thursday, September 13, 2007, via e-mail to comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us or by US Postal Service to: Project Coordinator John Cleeves; USDA Forest Service; 4931 Broad River Road; Columbia, SC 29212.

Your comments on potential environmental effects of the alternatives, including effects on aesthetic values (solitude, remoteness, wildness, protecting endangered experiences, psychological...) and social values (encounters, user conflicts, interference with activities such as angling, bird watching, wildlife viewing, the rights of others to solitude...) are requested. The North Fork's recreational Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV) includes aesthetic and social values in a foot travel only backcountry setting. Even if you have commented previously, please take time to share your views on all six of these alternatives.

The following are brief descriptions of the six management alternatives:

Alternative #1: Maintain current management. Foot travel only. No boating above the Highway 28 Bridge.

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.

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.

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).

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 Grimshaws Bridge and Lick Log Creek (year-round at 2.3 ft and higher).

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).

For more details of these alternatives and a side-by-side comparison table, go to:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/fms/documents/Chattoogascopingpackagefinal08142007.pdf>

For more background, go to: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/fms/>

Have you experienced user conflict or interference from whitewater boating on a mountain trout stream? Is it worse now than it was 20 years ago? What's it going to be like in another 20 years?

Do we need more stream sections zoned like the North Fork of the Upper Chattooga, for "foot travel only?"

Help protect for present and future generations the only section of the Chattooga not damaged by allowing access for too many user groups. Comment on the preliminary management alternatives, urging the Forest Service to protect and enhance the unique ORVs, which caused the North Fork to be designated a National Wild and Scenic River.

Zoning of conflicting uses is good stewardship, not discrimination. Stewardship encompasses far more than picking up litter; it includes the protection of the aesthetic values of natural resources such as remoteness and wildness, the proper regard for the rights of others to solitude, and the responsibility of preserving these values intact for future generations.



"Kelly J. Randall"
<krandall@charter.net>
09/12/2007 09:04 PM

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

Hope this one gets there.....last try.

-----Original Message-----

From: Kelly J. Randall [mailto:krandall@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2007 9:03 PM
To: 'comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us'
Subject: FW: Chatoogal

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<southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed>

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if you feel this message to be in error.
Reporting-MTA: dns; mtai04.charter.net
Arrival-Date: Wed, 12 Sep 2007 20:53:32 -0400
Received-From-MTA: dns; aa04.charter.net (10.20.200.156)
Content-Type:

Final-Recipient: RFC822; <southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed>
Action: failed
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Remote-MTA: dns; fs.fed

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Mike & Rebekah Morrow
<mrb_morrow@embarq
mail.com>

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

09/12/2007 09:06 PM

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 limit 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, [Mike Morrow, 1900 Madison St. Kingsport, TN 37665]



dmaryniak@bellsouth.net

09/12/2007 09:15 PM

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

cc:
Subject:

I am writing to you about the possible changes in usage in the upper chatooga river area. I am neither an angler or a boater. I have hiked many miles of both sides of the river for the last 2 decades. In all my hikes i have noticed that many of my encounters with anglers are often near bridges and are often unpleasent as they do not seem to like others on "their river". Or watching for "their best fishing hole". Anglers encountered farther from easier access points are often very nice and quite willing to explain what they do and why. Boaters have always been very cordial to me on the river bank. Often times they simply pass by. Many other times i have had the opportunity of asking questions about why they do and what the river means to them. You can tell that paddlers love the river for the river and are not there to conquer it. If fact overs the years as numbers of users (both fishermen a nd boaters) has grown i see more pollution due to unrecovered fishing tackle, again highly concentrated near easy access points. Thus would favor either restrictions for all users groups or no biased restrictions against paddlers. Also please do not allow motor vehicles to drive down to Sandy Ford. This is totally unacceptable. Also please creat a law that does not allow for wire across any stream in the area as this is offensive and potentially dangerous. The landowners in the upper reaches of the river have really made the area much less attractive by excess private property signs, preventing access to good stewards of the river, in the name of protecting it. I used to love to hike in the upper whitsides cover area. In the last 5 years all my negative encounters there (with fisherman and landowners) have lead me to hike near section 4 more often. Thanks for listening to this hiker's point of view.

David Maryniak



Curtis Elwood
<elwoodcg@yahoo.com
>

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

09/12/2007 09:17 PM

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I am writing in support of alternative 6, to allow unlimited boating, for the proposed Chattooga headwaters management plan. The alternatives that allow boating are limited and Alternative 6 appears to be the most equitable of the available alternatives.

Many in the angling community have expressed concerns on how the boating community will treat this precious resource. While change is scary, I believe time will tell that they are unfounded if boating is, once again, allowed on the upper Chattooga. Whitewater paddlers are very environmentally conscious and would not seek the privilege of paddling this section of river if it would mean a degradation of the resource.

The Forest Service lists recreational boating as a wilderness compatible activity. It's time the management of Sumter National Forest recognized it as such by implementing alternative 6. Current users will experience minimal change if boating is allowed. Most don't brave the weather when it has rained enough for the river be high enough to boat. When it is high enough, the water is often too high for good fishing.

Adding a highly motivated, environmentally conscious user group like whitewater boaters will only help to improve conditions on the river. Boaters often pick up trash from other user groups and don't take disposable containers and other trash along when boating.

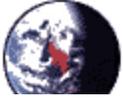
Alternatives that do not allow boating are completely unacceptable. The head of the Forest Service has already ruled that there was no justification for the boating ban and his guidance should be followed. Alternatives 4 and 5 are unbalanced in their approach. They limit boating, but place no new limits on current user groups even though other user groups have demonstrated substantial impact on this resource.

Given that whitewater boating is a wilderness compatible activity and is no more invasive than other uses of the resource, alternative 6 is the only alternative that offers a balanced approach to user access.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Curtis Elwood
4105 Virginia Ave
1st Floor
St. Louis, MO 63118

Fussy? Opinionated? Impossible to please? Perfect. [Join Yahoo!'s user panel](#) and lay it on us.



"Mike Nail"
<mnaill@charter.net>
09/12/2007 09:20 PM

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

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I am writing in regards of the current management situation and decision regarding boating on the upper stretches of the mighty Chattooga. I have kayaked on the lower sections of this river at many flow levels, and will say that it is a very special place, as are other Wild & Scenic Rivers, such as Wilson Creek, in North Carolina. My concern is that the alternatives listed are very biased against a single user group, which are boaters.

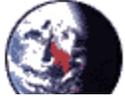
To read the boards on the internet that say boaters will ruin solitude on the river is absurd. I know that when my group and I float down any river, we are mindful of our surroundings and the river we are on, we know that it is a treasure, and not to do any damage it, but rather care for and protect it. We are just trying to protect the Chattooga river as well.

My wishes are that all user groups can share and enjoy the beautiful gorges and wildlife above the hwy 28 bridge, together, while protecting it from larger, more destructive movements such as commercial developments. This is something that will bring user groups together, and fight for what is rightfully OURS!

It is an honor to paddle on a river, passing fishermen along the way, knowing that they are enjoying this natural resource as much as I am, and that river can be enjoyed in such a diverse way. Please allow the rest of us to enjoy the entire river, we promise we will clean up after ourselves...

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Mike Nail
Black Mountain, NC



"climb4@juno.com"
<climb4

09/12/2007 09:25 PM

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

I am a kayaking weekend warrior hoping to one day be able to visit your area to kayak down some of the most beautiful river water this side of the Mississippi. I am a middle aged father, typical cube worker making a decent living getting involved in things I believe in. I believe I should have a right to be able to kayak anywhere on the Chattooga managed by the Forest Service.

This issue of river access to the headwaters north of highway 28, really disappoints me because it should not even BE an issue! It is clear that throughout the nation kayakers have had access to countless other similar rivers, sharing the resources with all other outdoor enthusiasts without issues. Why is this river governed different? It is the responsibility of the Forest Service to be fair, throughout the country on policies and procedures.

Seeing that the Forest Service has given us 6 choices I would have to choose option 6. It is closer to the national guidelines set in other Forest Service managed parks than any of the other options.

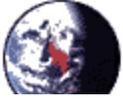
The Chattooga river is, as ratings go, considered to be an advanced river. The vast majority of paddlers that will come to enjoy that river will not be a bunch of drunken hoodlums, that some other groups have portrayed us as, but paddlers that are serious about our sport and have respect for the river and the entire environment surrounding it. The Chattooga is NOT the Hawassie, Ocoee or Nantahala, with rafts and tubes full of tourists whooping and hollering nor do we want it to be! We come to your area to enjoy the overall beauty, solitude, and ruggedness it has to offer just as other user groups do.

What we would like is a fair shake at the ability to enjoy our natural resources equally with our fellow outdoor enthusiasts. Option 6 please so I can bring my family to your area to enjoy a long weekend paddling the most challenging, pristine waters in the east.

Sincerely,

Mark Meszaras
417 Cappy Dr.
Knoxville, TN 37920

[Go to massage therapy school and make up to \\$150/hour, click now!](#)



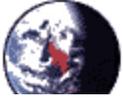
WILLIAM L WILLIAMS
<WLW6@COX.NET>

09/12/2007 10:31 PM

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

I am writing to support kayaking as one of many uses of the upper Chattooga River wilderness. I have been canoeing and kayaking across the US for more than 40 years and don't want to see such a beautiful area become inaccessible to a group of people who truly love the outdoors. This is a treasure to be shared among all people and must be managed by our government to be accessible by all, to be protected for all, and to be passed along to our children so that they may experience those things this wilderness area has in abundance. There is a way to manage this area so that all use groups have access and I expect you to find it. So many of the wilderness areas that I backpack in were at one time ruined by lumber operations and are now shining examples of wilderness recreation for many groups of people.

William L. Williams
258 Foster St
South Windsor, CT



"Michelle Francesco"
<michellef@gmail.com>

09/12/2007 09:30 PM

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

Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212-3530
comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

RE: Chattooga Scoping Document

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I strongly encourage you to remove the current ban on whitewater boating on the Upper Chattooga and allow this river corridor to be enjoyed by all user groups, in accordance with the Wilderness Act and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Boating should be allowed on the Upper Chattooga River to the same extent that hiking, angling, swimming, and other wilderness compliant activities are allowed.

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 limit 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

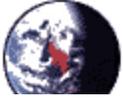
proposed USFS alternatives are not based on the social or physical capacity of the river corridor.

- 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.

Of the Alternatives presented in the Scoping Document, Alternative #6 is the only acceptable one that given that it does not exclude any user groups.

Thank you for considering these ideas.

Sincerely,
Michelle Francesco
Sunnyvale, CA



"Donald M Kelly"
<boater@nettally.com>
09/12/2007 09:30 PM

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Alternatives for Managing Recreation, Chattooga Wild & Scenic River

In response to your request for comments about the six preliminary proposals for recreation management on the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River, I recommend that you proceed with none of them and instead present a new proposal that allows expanded access to all sections of the river by different types of boaters, i.e., kayakers, canoeists and rafters.

The river's boating capacity is not infinite, but also is not small. Further, for virtually the entirety of the river corridor, boaters currently have very limited impact, with the impacts essentially confined to put-ins and take-outs, with the impacts at those points not being excessive. Once a kayak, canoe or raft has passed a point on the river, it's usually difficult to tell that anyone had been there ever.

I do not propose that there be no restrictions on river use, but if there were no limits, the potential for over-use of the Chattooga is limited by two facts: 1. From the major population centers, it's not on the way to anyplace else. Almost no one paddles the Chattooga as part of some other activity or because it fits in nicely for a planned trip. 2. It's a free-flowing river and thus can't be relied on having sufficient water for a trip planned significantly in advance. These facts dictate that most people who go the Chattooga go there only for the Chattooga and have short planning horizons. Others go to different rivers. This will not likely change.

These facts have another consequence: The boater attracted to the Chattooga tend to be the more experienced boater. Without exception that I'm familiar with, experienced boaters are highly sensitive to environmental issues regardless of their age, occupation or background. They have the knowledge and inclination to minimize resource impacts. I don't begrudge other user-groups' enjoyment of the river corridor, but on a typical trip to the Chattooga, the impact of nonboating is much more obvious than the impact from boaters. It's a myth, this image of boaters as thrill seekers whose antics destroy any possible pleasurable use of by others.

I've paddled the Chattooga more times that I can remember over the past 20 plus years, and some of the best times of my life have been on the river. This is one of the most beautiful places anywhere, but I doubt that you needed me to tell you. If anything, your management plan should seek to present more not fewer boating options. Efforts to preserve the river corridor are laudable, but excessive limits that reduce the numbers of potential users of the Chattooga also reduces the number of supporters of preservation programs and of the Wild and Scenic Rivers program.

Donald M. Kelly

Tallahassee, Florida



John Wallace
<kayakpsych@yahoo.com>
m>

09/12/2007 09:34 PM

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

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,

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).
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- 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 limit 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.

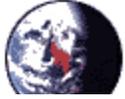
- Alternatives should look at varying levels of user created trail closures, user created trail hardening, creation of new trails, campsite closures or relocations, fish stocking, parking, total recreational use, angling use, hiking use, camping use, boating use, and swimming use.

Thank you for considering these ideas.

John Wallace
364 Thames St.
Groton, CT 06340

US Army Veteran of OIF nad OEF

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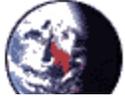
Phyllis Gricus
<PGricus@verizon.net>

09/12/2007 09:35 PM

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

Please support the boaters access to the Chattooga headwaters. Lift the unfair ban.

Thank you,
Phyllis Gricus



"Bill Kirby"
<ckirby05@verizon.net>
09/12/2007 09:35 PM

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

Mr. Cleeves,

This letter is to support elimination of the boating ban on the upper Chattooga.

I am an aquatic ecologist by training and profession and I have been a whitewater boater for almost 40 years. I paddled the Chattooga prior to the establishment of the Wild and Scenic River. I have written or contributed to hundreds of NEPA documents for Federal agencies. I have worked as a National Park Ranger and river manager. My academic specialty is the relationship between watershed land use and aquatic biotic communities.

My training and experience have given me ample opportunity to observe and study the impacts caused by all categories of park and forest users, ranging from ATVs to equestrians to whitewater boaters. I have no doubt that whitewater boaters cause the least environmental damage of all current and potential users of the Chattooga.

The current ban on boating is an historic anomaly that has never been justified by environmental concerns. It places the Forest outside the mainstream of Federal land management policy and is in conflict with the letter and intent of Wild and Scenic Rivers legislation.

Access to the resource should be open to all users with appropriate limits on concurrent use to preserve the wilderness experience and conserve natural resources. I urge you to adopt a management policy consistent with Federal law and the intent of Congress.

Bill Kirby, Ph.D.
22540 Watson Rd.
Leesburg, VA 20175
ckirby05@verizon.net
703-327-4177

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Version: 7.5.485 / Virus Database: 269.13.16/1004 - Release Date: 9/12/2007 5:22 PM



"p downing"
<pdowning2@hotmail.co
m>

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: ban on boating

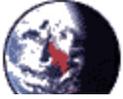
09/12/2007 09:39 PM

I'll keep my comments short and sweet. Please reopen the Chattooga, it is unfair to ban boats from the upper sections. I've spend as much time on the water around the Chattooga as I do in hiking boots. With such limited access to such beautiful areas already around the world is a shame to have such a gem in the Southeast and leave it untapped with such a biased access ban.

Please rethink this ban, even limited access would be better than no access.

Thank you,
-Paul

Can you find the hidden words? Take a break and play Seekadoo!
http://club.live.com/seekadoo.aspx?icid=seek_hotmailtextlink1



"Kirk Weir"
<dweir1@sc.rr.com>
09/12/2007 09:41 PM

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

9/12/07

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,

I am a 42 year old avid whitewater kayaker from Columbia, South Carolina. The Chattooga River is my favorite run having logged numerous trips on it in 2007 (in spite of the drought). Unfortunately, due to the continuing drought I haven't had the opportunity to paddle the Chattooga since May of this year and I sorely miss it. I would characterize my paddling skills as intermediate and will probably never run the headwaters section of the Chattooga. However, I believe the decisions made here are of utmost importance and could have a significant ripple effect on other designated Wild and Scenic Areas.

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.

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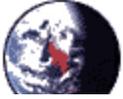
- to on a trail or river deep in the woods.
- Alternatives should look at varying levels of user created trail closures, user created trail hardening, creation of new trails, campsite closures or relocations, fish stocking, parking, total recreational use, angling use, hiking use, camping use, boating use, and swimming use.

As a side note, I find it hypocritical that there is such opposition to boating the headwaters when vehicles are allowed beside and in the Chattooga River (Georgia side) at Sandy Ford. Every time I paddle by that area I just shake my head in amazement at the degradation that's allowed.

Thank you for considering these ideas.

Sincerely,

Kirk Weir
335 Bayside Road
Columbia, SC 29212



Bobby Thompson
<hikerbob@uga.edu>

09/12/2007 09:49 PM

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

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I write this letter in response to the six potential alternatives for the management of the Upper Chattooga River. I start this letter by describing my devotion for the great natural resources that we have been gifted with in the Southeast. I am an Eagle Scout and through my acquisition of this rank found myself traversing North Georgia hundreds of times on various outings. It was through these outings that I discovered how blessed we are to have resources such as the Chattooga River. I remember a hiking trip along the Upper Chattooga that brought our troop to Ellicott rock. To stand in three states at one time was fantastic. The water was so clear and the fishing so grand!

I so greatly love the outdoors that I have decided to make it my career. I am now a student at the University of Georgia in Warnell's School of Forestry and Natural Resources. I am majoring in Natural Resource Recreation and Tourism. It is here that I have truly begun understanding the importance, as well as the methods to conserve our natural resources. It is through my understanding of conservation that has brought about my concern for the ban of kayaking down the Upper Chattooga River.

Kayaking is certainly the lowest impact sport that I participate in. As a kayaker I only need two points of access to a river, a place to slide my boat in and a spot to take it out at. As a fisherman I require miles of riverbank to walk along. This walking certainly has a greater impact on the environment than floating. A kayaker is only out for a day trip. A backpacker along this area will certainly spend several days hiking. The amount of time spent in the environment directly relates to the impact on the environment. Shorter exposure equals to a lower impact. A kayaker does not require the trail that a backpacker does. Rain will fall, the waters will rise, and the trail will be formed. As an individual who would like to use this reach of river for fishing, hiking, and boating I should offer another point. The times in which each group will utilize the river varies greatly. On a hot summer day when the water is low hikers, swimmer, and fisherman will flock to the river. Kayakers will certainly pose no threat on days of this nature. Kayakers will be present on days of higher water, usually in the winter months. Hikers, swimmers, and fisherman will most likely not find these days suitable for their needs.

Banning kayaking and allowing hiking and fishing certainly doesn't seem like the best management practice possible for the Upper Chattooga River. As a family of outdoorsmen, we the hikers, kayakers, and fisherman should all appreciate what the Upper Chattooga River has to offer. There is no need to exclude any person from utilizing the river as long as they are respecting the environment during their endeavors. I simply ask you, the U.S Forest Service, to allow the use of this river by kayakers just as it does fisherman, hikers, and all other outdoor enthusiasts!

Sincerely,

Bobby Thompson

Email: Hikerbob@uga.edu

Cell: (404) 202-2826



"Max Kinser"
<max@net2atlanta.com
>

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

09/12/2007 09:52 PM

Max Kinser

The ban on the Chattooga headwaters is both immoral and illegal. I have grown up around the Chattooga, I kayak it and I love that river. It is a true world class whitewater river. But not all of it is legal to boat, I think that is wrong. Fishermen are ignorant, they think that kayakers will damage the resource a lot, but the inverse is the truth. They pollute with their fishing refuse, they require stocking of non-native invasive species that hurt the population of the intrinsic redeye bass and southern brook trout. This doesn't make sense to me. Why should the anglers get to damage the resource to make them happy? Also the Chattooga is a decent but not in any way spectacular cold water fishery, it is however an amazing whitewater resource. At a recent public meeting the idea that a kayaker introduces non-native species of flora and fauna was brought up, this also doesn't make sense because aren't the soles of felt sole fishing boots a breeding ground for non-native bacteria and spores of fungi, plants, and diseases. Another point brought up at that public meeting was the idea that we stole the bottom two thirds of the river from the anglers. That is not true; they also say that all the fish have been killed as a result of kayaking. I disagree, on a recent fishing trip in duckies from Bull Sluice to Woodall Shoals my father and I (who are in no way skilled fisher people) caught more fish than we could count, all of them native redeye bass and "sucker fish". Also almost all of the opposition are old men with stubborn ways that do not want to change the status quo which is wrong! Those people aren't going to be able to use the resource in a few years, at the young age of thirteen I will be able to use this amazing wilderness resource for many years to come. What I am saying is I am the future I am the one whose opinion matters the most, change for me and the people close to my age, those are the people who will really benefit from it. Another point the fishermen are trying to make is that kayakers will remove "natural woody debris" which is habitat for fish, although occasionally kayakers will do that they will only remove it when it is in the middle of a rapid and poses a lethal threat. One question appears in my mind though and that is "why are we making habitat for fish that shouldn't be there in the first place". One thing that makes me angry forest service is that you make me fill out a permit every time I want to do anything on the river. If I have to do that EVERYONE ELSE SHOULD TOO. If the maximum user capacity on the Upper Chattooga has been reached then you should limit all user groups not just whitewater kayakers. That is discrimination on what you could call a race (oh by the way, that is illegal). This ban is messed up and should be changed. I challenge you the Forest Service to change this dumb rule that has been in place for far too long, if you don't I think everyone will think you guys are cowards and are afraid to change the status quo because of a bunch of selfish, self centered grumpy old men. Please consider these comments and remember you going to have to be able to fall asleep at night, so make the right choice (you know which one is right) so you can do so.

Max Kinser, age thirteen



James Murtha
<jmurtha@wowway.com
>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Comments on Chattooga W&S River Management

09/12/2007 09:56 PM

Please see the comments in the attached word document. Thanks much.



Chattooga Comments.doc

Jim Murtha
761 South Cassingham Rd.
Columbus, OH 43209

Mr. John Cleaves
Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212-3530

Subject: Chattooga Headwaters Management Plan Comment

I have reviewed the alternatives proposed by the USFS dated August 14th, 2007 and I am disappointed with the alternatives the USFS has published in the latest document dated August 14th, 2007. There should be equal access to all use consistent with that seen in Wilderness and Wild and Scenic areas throughout the rest of the country. Angling, hiking, boating, and other activities that do not harm the wilderness and the wild and scenic character of the river should be permitted and properly managed. In fact, all boating alternatives should include boating on all sections.

There is broad support for requiring permits/registration for all users. If the USFS can demonstrate that the upper Chattooga's capacity is met, all users' access (not just that of one group) should be limited consistent with sustainability of the resource. This has only been included in the boating alternatives and Alternative #2. Permits/registration should be included in all alternatives except for the status quo. Permits and Registration are required to achieve the Objective of #3 "manage biophysical impacts on natural resources by limiting trails, campsites, group size, parking and types of use." Without a permit system and count of users, there is no way of properly managing the resources as the management will not be based on viable metrics.

Parking should be eliminated at Burrell's Ford and it should be moved outside the corridor. I would support a new parking lot to be opened outside the W&S corridor and trails built to allow access. This would passively reduce use not compatible with Wilderness and a Wild and Scenic status such as litter and undue wear due to uncontrolled car camping activities.

The USFS should influence and control stocking in the W&S corridor. Stocking of non-native species in the W&S corridor should be eliminated.

Alternatives #4 & #5 include limits on group numbers and group sizes for boating. I am in favor of limiting the number of all users including boaters. However, such limits should be based on sound management metrics with the goal of giving access to all types of sustainable wilderness activity as indicated above without unduly encumbering users where not necessary. More research is needed to establish the correct limits. I would believe that ultimately most limits would only restrict party size and that generally there is no need to limit the total usage unless the capacity of the W&S corridor or a section of it is met. At that point, access to such an area should be limited for all activities.

Jim Murtha
761 South Cassingham Rd.
Columbus, OH 43209

No woody debris recruitment should be included in any alternatives. Only very limited woody debris removal should be allowed on the Upper Chattooga.

I believe that the Chattooga W&S river should be managed in a way that allows it to return as much as possible to its natural and pristine state. We need new standards limiting trailheads, trails and campsites. We need new standards limiting group sizes, encounters between groups, and access points. Boating, hiking, and angling should be allowed on all sections of the river.

Thanks for the opportunity to present my views on the management of this truly remarkable resource.

Best Regards,

Jim Murtha



"Ken Dubel"
<kendubel@gmail.com>

09/12/2007 09:55 PM

To: "comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us"
<comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Chattooga: Mayhaps a peaceful view of the situation?

I'm guessing these words will most likely get tossed into a bin somewhere but I thought I'd give it a shot.

Odd for me to write to a non-individual with some passion but I'll give it a try.

I've been following this Chattooga stuff at some distance for years now. It would be great if someday I happened to be in the area, the river happened to have some water in it, and I happened to be with a group of trusted fellows interested in paddling the upper reaches. Sub-point being, these circumstances will be rare -- I'd expect traffic to be low.

Oh, and, it would be great to not be arrested for doing so.

I will not bore you with, ahem, "talking points".

I have read many articles regarding not allowing boating on these reaches, tried to see their sides, yet don't agree.

In my opinion it shouldn't even be an issue. Boating should be allowed.

Thank you for dealing with all the mish-mosh.

Yours,

Ken Dubel



Glen and Vicky
Tsaparas
<onwaves@verizon.net>

09/12/2007 09:59 PM

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

To Mr. John Cleeves,

I am writing in strong support of the Chattooga Management Plan

Alternative #6. Boaters have a right of equal access to the Upper Chattooga as that bestowed upon fisherman, hikers and wildlife enthusiasts. This right is in spirit and letter of the law of the Wilderness Preservation Act and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

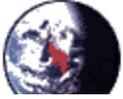
The majority of letters in support of Alternative #6 have made strong, thoughtful and compelling arguments. Few of the opposing arguments can be substantiated. In my 20 years as a whitewater boater and 35 years as a fly fisherman, backpacker and outdoor enthusiast, I can attest that whitewater boaters have a highly developed sense of wilderness use ethics. Yet on the other hand, I have been witness to the trash and stream bank trail erosion caused by fisherman. Further, countless are the rivers and streams where fisherman and paddlers share the resource without negative impacts on one another. In fact, when the river water level is high enough to allow for an enjoyable paddling experience then it will be too high for typical fisherman to enjoy fishing. I could write volumes debunking the arguments of those opposing boating on the Upper Chattooga but that has already been done by those voicing their **support for Alternative #6.**

I focused on the impacts of fishermen as there is a few within this group of users that seem to be at the core of the controversy, fanning the flames of this issue so they can protect their privileged status.

Equal access regardless of whether you carry a fishing rod, backpack or kayak. Base decisions on fair and wise management.

I may not be a local resident, but this is federal land and I as a tax payer have a right to work to influence fair and equitable use on this national Forest.

Sincerely,
Glen Tsaparas
703-819-2185



"Leslie Temples"
<leslie@ltemples.com>

09/12/2007 10:01 PM

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



Comments of the Atlanta Fly Fishing Club. AFFC Comments.doc

DRAFT

Mr. John Cleeves
US Forest Service
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, South Carolina 29212

September 12, 2007

Re: Proposed alternatives for Chattooga River

Dear Mr. Cleeves:

The Atlanta Fly Fishing Club (“AFFC”), an affiliate of the national organization, Federation of Flyfishers, has over 250 members in the greater Atlanta metropolitan area. Our members often fish in the mountains of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. We find the upper portion of the Chattooga River provides a unique experience in the Southeast for flyfishing in a remote, wilderness setting and urge the Forest Service to continue to protect this outstanding recreation opportunity.

The Forest Service has put forward six alternatives for consideration, each with various management tools and objectives. Our comments will focus on two issues of particular importance: 1) the management of boating use; and 2) the management of large woody debris in streams. With respect to boating, the AFFC supports Alternatives 1 through 3, which would maintain the existing Forest Service policy of managing non-foot traffic use of the upper Chattooga by zoning boating to the lower two-thirds of the wild and scenic portion of the Chattooga River. AFFC also supports those portions of the alternatives that would enhance woody debris recruitment (Alt 2 & 3), which is important to protect the aquatic environment for stream organisms including trout.

1. ZONED MANAGEMENT OF BOATING USE SHOULD CONTINUE

Our members’ use of the Chattooga River has already been impacted by boating as our members routinely avoid the high boating use areas of the river below Highway 28 and hike instead to areas above Highway 28. To introduce boating into the upper section, simply to satisfy a minority of boaters that use high-tech creek hard boats and kayaks, would damage the unique and outstanding fishing experience the upper Chattooga offers. Contrary to certain claims, the current zoned management system fairly impacts both boaters and fishers. Many of our members use floating devices or boats when fishing other rivers in the Southeast but understand and endorse the limitation on such floating devices or boats in the upper Chattooga. Simply put, limiting access to this relatively small portion of the river to foot-traffic-only preserves the environment and the unique recreation experience of a wide variety of recreation users. Such a common sense management tool is used in many wilderness settings to limit destructive or higher impact uses from transportation vehicles such as ATVs, bicycles and boats. The Indian Peaks Wilderness Area of Colorado is only one of many such examples of foot-traffic-only management of wilderness areas.

DRAFT

Nor would the flow, seasonal, size of party or registration techniques for managing boating, as proposed in Alternatives 4 through 6, accomplish the objectives of reducing conflict between recreation uses.¹ Our members typically travel from the Atlanta area to fish in the Chattooga River. After traveling to the upper Chattooga, our members will fish in various types of weather, including rainy weather that produces higher flows. In fact, increased flow from rain can improve fishing quality as grasshoppers, insect larvae and other natural food sources for trout are washed into the river. Flow restrictions on boating then would actually increase conflict. Further, whereas boats and fishermen can co-exist in larger bodies of water such as the wide Chattahoochee that flows through Atlanta, the impact to the fishing experience from boats passing by (once or repeatedly to run certain rapids) is far greater in the small stream environment that typifies the upper Chattooga. Indeed, the target for both creek boaters and flyfishers in such an environment is often the deep pools that form at the base of falls and other whitewater runs. These quiet pools support the best fish populations and our common experience is that the fish in these natural pools in the upper Chattooga are easily spooked. Having one or multiple kayaks plunge into these pools obviously would damage the fishing experience, and in certain instances, endanger the wading fishermen themselves. The Forest Service should continue to use common sense in managing this wonderful resource.

2. ENHANCE LARGE WOODY DEBRIS RECRUITMENT

Large woody debris can make it more difficult for walking flyfishers (or boats) to pass up or down stream, but the value of large woody debris to the stream environment far outweighs any inconvenience to users. Of course, this debris is more common as stream size decreases with the lower water flows that would otherwise wash out such debris. Such debris provides invertebrates and fish with valuable habitat and enhances the river environment. Removing such debris to encourage boating use would degrade the environment, particularly in the upper portions of the Chattooga River. Therefore, the AFFC encourages the Forest Service to protect the environment by enhancing large woody debris recruitment, as proposed in Alternatives 2 and 3.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments of the Atlanta Fly Fishing Club.

Very truly yours,

Michael E. Williams
For the Atlanta Fly Fishing Club
Atlanta, Georgia
www.atlantaflyfishingclub.org

¹ The current zoned management policy is itself a compromise between the boating use and other recreation uses. Therefore, to the extent the Forest Service changes the status quo by introducing boating *above* Highway 28, the Forest similarly should reduce boating use *below* Highway 28.



"Tom Hession"
<tchmntsofnc@dnet.net
>

To: <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>
cc:
Subject: Francis Marion & Sumter National Forests

09/12/2007 10:01 PM

John Cleeves

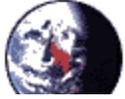
I feel the ban on boating should be lifted. There seems to be a certain group of people who feel this section of the river is theirs alone. I feel that paddlers will not be as much of an impact as these people fear. First off, as far as boater/swimmer encounters go, (especially with children) there would be none. People are not about to swim around the bottom of drops (waterslides) at the levels it would be boatable and if they were then, they would be in more danger of the water than the boater. Secondly the overlap of good boating water levels and good fishing water levels make for only a few encounters. Finally it seems to me as a boater that most hikers I encounter are friendly and curious.

As for the management of the Upper Chattooga –there is none. The number of undesignated trails, campsites, and the disgusting habit of defecating near by these places is abhorable. I feel that the Forest Service has neglected any control of the misuse that is so evident already. A simple comparison of the conditions at the put in on Overflow creek verses the trashed out, over run area at Burrells Ford will prove who is doing what in regards of unlawful behavior- i.e. cutting trees, littering, undesignated camping, bonfires, beer cans and fishing garbage. The swimmers should be worried about all the terrible hooks on the river bottom instead of a boater.

If limits on users are to be implemented, why not impose limits on the number of campers, fishermen, hikers and swimmers. And even if you did who would enforce them ---the same people who enforce where you can camp and where you cannot? On a spring camping trip this year my children and I watched a man snag fish from Burrells Ford Bridge with a bare hook. It seemed that because they were just released (non-native) they weren't biting. So he snagged them. Then the next day we saw a fisherman using a pellet handgun to kill his fish when he landed them in his net. So who is managing the fishermen?

To finish, I would like to say I'm appalled at the amount of money, time and resources that have been used to study this illegal ban on boating. I wish you would have spent it on a couple more rangers, some new bathrooms and a couple of employees to pick up trash and empty the trash cans.

Tom Hession
100 Autry Lane
Franklin NC



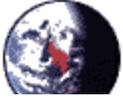
crash2006@bellsouth.net

09/12/2007 10:04 PM

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

from the thoughts of Matt Wright

This is not what should be happening. As many people agree small boating is an adventure sport and it needs adventures. I am a thirteen year old and the Chattooga is a spiritual place why close it? Society should be able to visit this place on certain expeditions. Me and my young boating friends agree that millions of people in the years to come will want to visit this spiritual and incredible place. Why Do we do this one decent in twenty years COME ON!! We have the right to go to this incredible place. As AW has resisted and they will keep doing it until the government is poor and there is no more money to sue for. We might as well have a dictatorship run the place and not let people paddle large and commonly used rivers Nantahala, Gauley, and innumeros others. The Chattooga sections 3+4 are incredible places to go and they are classics WHY DON'T WE MAKE THE HEADWATERS a legend/classic.



<dfordhammd@windstre
am.net>

09/12/2007 10:04 PM

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

Prefer alternative #3. Please help maintain and protect the natural beauty of one of the last good fisheries. Greed has gobbled up so much of our other natural resources. Donald L Fordham MD



"Jim Dobbins"
<jdobbins@rochester.rr.
com>

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

09/12/2007 10:05 PM

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

Mr Cleeves,

I am writing to you today with some comments on the Chattooga River and the controversy surrounding kayaking on the river. As a lover of the outdoors and wilderness I have spent many years in wilderness all over the country. I have spent time backpacking in designated wilderness areas and have enjoyed the beauty of these areas so I certainly understand the need to protect them. In the case of the Chattooga I am confused. I am a whitewater kayaker and have been so for the last several years. Kayaking is one of the lowest impact activities I have ever been associated with. Kayakers are a great example of the "leave no trace" guidelines. Kayakers hardly even leave footprints. Reading through the possible choices it seems almost biased toward one user group. These choices in my opinion leave much to be desired. Most seem to regulate only one group (kayakers) while giving other groups mostly unlimited access. In my opinion designated wilderness areas should be just that. They should be protected and no one group should be singled out. Whitewater boaters don't want to bring in motor boats or even large crowds. They only wish to enjoy the outdoors from the seat of their kayaks. If I had to choose one of the "actions" I would choose #6 although I do believe it is also flawed. I hope that common sense and judgement are used before any decision is made. This river is not owned by one user group, it is protected wilderness. It is protected so we can all enjoy it.

Thank you for your time,

Jim Dobbins
561 Shorecliff Dr
Rochester, NY 14612



"Brian C. Berg"
<bberg@berginfotech.com>
m>

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

09/12/2007 10:10 PM

Mr. Cleeves,

I am aware of the discussion on the disposition of the Upper Chattooga River and am appalled by the misinformation and misconceptions about kayaking and canoeing in comments made by anti-boating people and groups. As a kayaker, I am interested in responsible use of the natural resources belonging to every citizen of this country. My experience as a kayaker has shown me that responsible kayaking and canoeing does not have a negative impact on creeks and rivers. Additionally, singling out paddlers for denial of access to any waterway is unjust and illogical.

To provide for responsible use of the Upper Chattooga River and its borders, there should be new standards limiting trailheads, trails and campsites. Limits on use in terms of capacity should be created if a scientific determination of a non-damaging capacity is formulated. Kayaking on the Chattooga River in any area is not a new activity. Boating access has been arbitrarily and unfairly removed while other activities are unrestricted. Limits on group sizes, encounters, or access applied solely to boating would be contrary to the reason for applying such restrictions. Capacity applies to all activities, not just boating.

Each additional citizen that uses a resource responsibly is an additional citizen interested in preserving and protecting the resource. I hope that the Forest Service chooses to do the right thing; to allow responsible use of the Upper Chattooga River that includes kayaking and canoeing.

Brian C. Berg

1365 SHEFFIELD PKWY

MARIETTA GA 30062-2746

(770) 579-5468



C Coleman
<cheetahrk@yahoo.com>
m>

To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc: cheetahrk@hotmail.com, charlene work <ccoleman@nbssc.com>
Subject:

09/12/2007 10:13 PM

Twelve Long Years of Frustration

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,

Twelve long years of frustration, meetings, workshops, email, letters, cards, tons of paper, hours of reading, phone calls, stress and money. Where are we, not far from where we started? Why, is this taking so long to get it right? Conservation and public rights to resources set aside by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was supposed to be the directive.

It is disturbing to watch as the "conflicts" of legend control the process of years and millions of dollars. Conflict on the Chattooga, a legend, similar to the tales that lead people to believe they shouldn't get out on the Georgia side of the river. Conflicts that have no written documentation, no arrests, no support other than hearsay and fishing stories passed on like campfire tales. Yet the Forest Service and a few elderly locals would have you believe it is just like gang wars. The perpetuation of this legend has been promoted at every gathering, source of literature and article that comes out of the process from the Forest Service, but yet, there are no hard facts or written reports of such problems.

Now those "fish tales", are the basis for the Management of one of the most revered areas/ivers in the Nation.

I have had the pleasure of 35 years of hiking, camping, fishing, wading, floating, boating and even rescuing in the Andrews Pickens District of the Francis Marion/Sumter National Forest, home of the Chattooga River. The only conflict I have truly ever seen; was over protection of the forest; not fishing, not hiking, not boating, not private land.

What I have seen, are trucks driving into the river from the Georgia side to be washed, campfire pits full of garbage, campsites big enough for 6 large 6 man tents, torn up trails and destroyed plants, broken up foliage for firewood or with nails, ropes and string in them. The ugly cuts created by fishermen to get to the river from the trails. It's the worst when the stocking helicopter and trucks show up. Then it's like Wal Mart on pay day. They come in herds to fish. They bring coolers and gather enough fish to fill them to the top and no one seems to care there are rules, because they say "we'll never get caught".

They don't clean up the trash, because they "never get caught"...

Well that is Status Quo. That is Alternative #1. This seems to be what the Forest Service is most proud of....Status Quo. It's an embarrassment. It isn't the Conservation Mission you are supposed to up hold.

After all, that's why the Forest Service was created. That's what Gifford Pinchot, the "father of American forestry" meant when he derived the name for his idea of conservation from "conservancy," the term for a large tract of forest land managed by a "conservator" in British India. Conservation-the management, restoration, protection and preservation of natural resources-was his prescription for finding a balance between human activity and the workings of nature.

We haven't been working towards just one end; this is not just about boating access. It is about Conservation and access. The Chattooga hasn't been protected by any accepted management technique. It hasn't been treated with the reverence it has earned. So many of the user groups express the same feeling of spiritual attachment, but boaters have been the only one represented by the Forest Service to be of single purpose, when in fact we are the only ones that has for years expressed the drive to argue that the management and health of the whole area is in question.

In the Alternatives we find #6 prescriptions for sub standard management. The first is a throw away, status quo is no management (the same as we see presently) #'s 2 and 3 fail to cover the gravity of the overall condition of the area, the actual offenders of the degradation and continues to ban boating with out any equality among users or basis for such a ban. They have no provision for monitoring all users and gathering data for user impacts for future management plans.

Alternatives # 4-6 all have boating restrictions by section or flow, none with any supportive data to warrant such harsh restrictions. None of them offer the sufficient protection or the corrective steps needed to protect the Chattooga. None of them deal with the hard decisions based on data collection and monitoring to use as a basis for correcting the present damage and preventing further damage

None of the 6 protects the Chattooga properly and though #6 is more agreeable in allowing boating and user registration, it still has boating restrictions seemingly based on whim and not data. None of the 6 includes 1.7 miles of the northern most section of the river, to its source, as required by the Appeal Decision from the Chief of the Forest Service.

The Chattooga belongs to all the public not the chosen few, not the favored groups, not the groups with money, political pull or some other backcountry, insider, good ole boy, favoritism management. The Chattooga holds spiritual and emotional strength in many people and dates back to the Indians that lived here before. It deserves real care, effort, and conservation worthy of a national jewel.

Supervisor Thomas states **he** has selected six alternatives. It concerns me that one person selects the criteria for management, for with credit, so goes blame. He is quoted in the press release, "The public will notice some common themes through out the alternatives." He is correct; I noticed no data supports any restrictions of one group over another and not all groups were studied, nor their individual impacts. They all have minimal management of biophysical impacts present or future. There is a trinket of user registration with no plans for implementation of controls over the negative impacts caused by specific user groups based on any scientific data or study.

I propose we stop wasting time and money, use the study we all paid for, register and monitor all users. Open the river to boating and allow Mother Nature and common

sense to regulate the river's use and condition. Stop or greatly reduce the stocking of non-indigenous fish that promotes over use and damage. Monitor and enforce fishing regulations. Implement standard resource protection and initiate a restoration process that fixes the damage already done. Woody debris is a natural process and should be left entirely such with no human intervention. Close user created trails, campsite and fire rings. Educate and regulate use based on Low Impact and Leave No Trace procedures. Use standard boating safety restrictions. Regulate floating use to: no commercial use, inflatable crafts of more than one air chamber, and crafts of less than 3 occupancy. Limit all user groups to 6 and special permits for groups of up to 12. Construct 500 feet of portage trail. Delineate between frontcountry and backcountry areas and set standards of use accordingly. Reduce parking areas size and move the Burrell's Ford parking area to outside the corridor.

Use a 5 year monitoring and data collection process for all users. Implement aggressive indirect measures to control negative impacts and after 3 years, if required, use direct measures to target specific areas and aimed at violations attributed to specific user groups. After 5 years, if impacts and supporting data indicate the need of permitting restrictions or limits, they must be equitable for all groups.

If this seems unpalatable, I strongly recommend shutting down the area above Hwy 28 to all users and allow it to naturally rehabilitate over a time of 2 years. After such resource improvements, set up a new NEPA process starting at zero for all users and develop a plan that truly enhances, protects and serves the people of the United States of America as you are so charge in your motto and mission statement of over 100 years.

Sincerely

Charlene Coleman

3351 Makeway Drive
Columbia, SC 29201
803-254-3147
cheetahtrk@yahoo.com

Whitewater Rescue Technician
Swiftwater Rescue Technician
Volunteer Oconee County Tactical Rescue
American Canoe Association Whitewater Kayak Instructor

It is not so much the example of others we imitate, as the reflection of ourselves in their eyes and the echo of ourselves in their words.

--Eric Hoffer

Charlene Coleman

American Whitewater

Regional Coordinator

Take the Internet to Go: Yahoo!Go puts the [Internet in your pocket](#): mail, news, photos & more.