

Chattooga River Public Comments
March 11 - May 20 2006

Posted on Wednesday, March 18, 2006 at 4:29 Hours (Server time).

I sent the following comments by the comment form on the website January 4th. Upon recent review of the comments received and the bulletin board I could not find my comment. I would like to submit again to be sure it was received.

I believe boating has a place above Hwy 28. I would like to make the following points.

1. Limits placed on boaters based on water level would be difficult to administer; Changing conditions with rainfall, Who sets the limit, What is a safe boating level to one group may not be to the next, What gauge to use and how will it be easy to access to all users?
2. Why not consider opening the headwaters to boating on all but two days per week (perhaps Sunday and Monday). This would allow a refuge for fishermen or others wishing an experience without boaters. This would provide a very predictable scenario with little gray area. Another variation would allow boating on all odd days of the month (1st, 3rd, 5th, etc.)
3. Boating is a dispersed activity using long stretches of river with few stream bank and trail impacts. Fishing, hiking, swimming, boating access, sightseeing, etc. all tend to be high impact on trails and banks, especially at vehicle access points.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jack Wise
P.O. Box 309
Long Creek, SC 29658

864-647-9587

Posted on Wednesday, March 22, 2006 at 4:29 Hours (Server time).

From: Chad Spangler
Email: river0013@mindspring.com

Telephone Number: 678-230-8173

Street Address:
2653 Drew Valley Rd NE
Atlanta, GA 30319

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I do not see the comments I made in January listed in the public comments. Please check your records to make sure that all submitted comments are being properly documented and posted.

I will comment again since there doesn't appear to be a public record of my previous comments.

I support keeping the Chattooga River a "Wild" and "Scenic" place. Protection of the resource should be paramount in any decisions regarding use. I believe boating can be part of a healthy Chattooga headwaters as it is a wilderness compliant use. Boating on all sections of the Chattooga headwaters should be allowed during the study period. The inclusion of paddling in the study (with no more restrictions placed on it during the study period than other wilderness compliant uses) is necessary to accurately and fairly determine acceptable levels of use. If an objective capacity analysis finds that use in the headwaters corridor is too high I support limiting usage to protect the river in its natural, spectacular state. Any limiting of use by boaters must not be arbitrary and should also be applied in an equitable way to other user groups based on a scientific study on each user group's impact on the river environment.

I am opposed to any additional construction in the headwaters area. No parking areas, paved trails, restrooms or other "improvements" are necessary. The area should be "Wild" and "Scenic"!!

In order to protect the river I appeal to all users, including my fellow paddlers, to be good stewards of the area and make use of existing trails and parking areas, voluntarily limit their group size, and refrain from any activities that impact the natural state of the river corridor (i.e. constructing fire rings, removal of wood from the river, littering). If all of us would try to follow Leave No Trace principles each time we are in the river corridor it would enhance every users experience in the Chattooga River area.

Thank you for your consideration,
Chad Spangler

Posted on Wednesday, March 29, 2006 at 9:53 Hours (Server time).

From: Robert Farmer
Email: rsfarmer@cavtel.net

Telephone Number: 443-874-8534

Street Address:
P.O. Box 41115
Baltimore, MD 21203

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Boating on rivers is probably the lowest-impact activity that happens in a forest. Boaters travel on the water, which is not damaged, and they require only brief land access at the top and the bottom of the river, which involves far less impact than any other activity. It is insane that boating not be considered as a legitimate use of the Upper Chattooga River. Boating should definitely be considered and included in any study of recreation in the Sumpter National Forest.

Mr. Cleaves,

I just wanted to voice my opinion that keeping the Upper Chattooga boating-free seems like a good idea. Having visited the Chattooga multiple times, first as a SC resident, now as a Georgia resident, I appreciate the solitude and beauty of the area and would very much like to keep the opportunity to experience the area this way available. I would respectfully urge that you maintain the current status of the area as a boating-free zone. Thank you.

Timothy Gotsick
Acworth, GA
webchem@bellsouth.net

Gentlemen,

I am a trout fisherman and a boater. I understand the conflict between the two, but I maintain that there are few areas left in this USA that offer solitude and a wilderness experience as pure as the Upper Chattooga area.

Please keep this stretch of the river boat and raft free.

Chris Borders
1494 Rucker Circle

Woodstock. Ga. 30188

Chris Borders, CCM
General Manager
Atlanta Athletic Club
1930 Bobby Jones Drive
Duluth, Ga. 30097
acb@aac1.org
770-448-2166(Office)
770-662-8693(FAX)

Posted on Tuesday, April 11, 2006 at 11:58 Hours (Server time).

From: Neal J. Vernon
Email: njvernon@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: (803) 238-9417

Street Address:
1116 Olympia Ave. Apt. B
Columbia, SC 29201

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

While I feel it is important to let everyone enjoy the area, boaters are allowed on 3/4 of the river, while trout fisherman are limited to it's upper stretches. Considering these facts, it seems a decision is whether to transform this river into an all boating river, neglecting one of the last free flowing trout streams in SC, or continue to allow everyone to enjoy all facets of the river by continuing boating restrictions above HWY 28.

Posted on Thursday, April 20, 2006 at 17:09 Hours (Server time).

From: Bill Adams
Email: paddle@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 662-843-6171

Street Address:
P.O. Box 1209
Cleveland, MS 38732

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I respectfully submit that allowing non-motorized, non-commercial boating above Highway 28 is the only reasonable decision here. The

people permitted are the people who truly love and appreciate the outdoors.

Posted on Friday, April 21, 2006 at 9:41 Hours (Server time).

From: Bill Manning
Email: billmanning@santensusa.com

Telephone Number: 8649342760

Street Address:
1850 Denver Rd.
Anderson, S.C. 29625

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have been visiting the Chattoga river for close to 40 years, well before its inclusion to the National Wild and Senic River status. During this time I have camped extensively, hiked, backpacked, fished and paddled the river. Its my opinion that the forest service got it right the first time in regards to establishing the parameters of river usage. Section One should never be opened to floating or paddling. It is pristine with none of the scar's left from canoes and kayaks sliding over the rocks. Its also to shallow to comfortably float with out a lot of portage. However, the bottom line is thats it simply not needed as additional miles of river to float. The balance of the Chattooga is no where close to being over used by guides and paddlers. I think that what we are hearing is the voice of a few simply dreaming of conquering some holy grail of white water that doesn't really exist in the first place. Section one is primarily used by small groups and individuals fishing and hiking there for the unique environment that exist in this area which includes not having to move out of the pools while fishing to allow a caravan of rafts to pass though. I have been one of these floaters and I love to paddled, but it does disturb the essence of section one. The individuals that primarily use section one are not organized business groups that speak in louder more agressive tones to push their minority voice over on the unorganized individuals that do use this area. When is enough enough? Sometimes things are done right the first time. In this case, lets leave well enough alone. Thanks, Bill Manning

Keep boats off the Upper Chattooga!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

R Robson

266 Evergreen
Dillard, Ga

May 7, 2006

John,

I am a member of the Mountain Bridge chapter of TU and wish to state that I support the ban on boating on the upper waters of the Chattooga River. I am 57 years old, and first started trout fishing on the Watauga River in East Tennessee. I moved to South Carolina after my completing my military service in the winter of 1975 and have lived here since. My father introduced me to the streams of South Carolina and I have spent as much time as possible exploring them ever since, to the point of hand mapping the Foothills Trail onto old USGS topo maps and backpacking into many of the areas for the purpose of experiencing the solitude that can only come from a willingness to seek out trout fishing untainted by the encroachment of commercial interests and the like.

I will not go into all the reasons that been put forth by so many eloquent voices except to reiterate that I wholeheartedly agree with the desire that there should remain some places as untouched as possible to ecological modifications. My background is rooted in 20 years of work in forest procurement, having received a BS in Forest Management from Clemson University in '80. I have been witness to both sides of the fence with respect to resource management and environmental protection. There is obviously much to discuss about the different points of view of these areas, but again, my point here is to state simply my strongly held beliefs as mentioned above.

In addition to being a member of Trout Unlimited, I am assuming an active role, not just of championing the cause of trout and the places they live, but of promoting responsible use of our fragile resources. I have accepted, at the request of David Van Lear, director of the Back the Brookie campaign in South Carolina, the position of Advance chair for that committee. I am also in the process of developing a web site for the committee. I have also been asked to take over the duties of news bulletin editor for the Mountain Bridge chapter as well as the responsibility over the chapter's web site. I intend to use these platforms, in addition to my own personal web site, for the purpose of promoting conservation and responsible use of our cold water resources. I believe we need as many voices to be heard as possible to make anyone willing to listen about the pitfalls inherent in thinking "well, perhaps this is not so bad after all.". Because, quite simply, it is. I want those who come after me to have the same opportunity to discover, explore, enjoy, and leave for others the world that I have been privileged to know. I believe it is our responsibility to undo the mistakes of those who preceded us, since we have the greater benefit of hindsight. Armed with knowledge, we can and need to do all that we can to restore and maintain the balance of nature.

Thank you for your willingness to review my comments. I hope to remain in communication with you in the future.

Respectfully,

Mark T. Szymanski

May 18, 2006

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Jack Wise

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1251 Academy Rd.

Long Creek, SC 29658

864-647-9587

864-647-5361 fax