

**Chattooga River Public Comments Dec. 7 - 13, 2005**

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 23:45 Hours (Server time).**

From: Carolyn Rand  
Email: sobigscat@aol.com

Telephone Number: 423 236-4026

Street Address:  
11517 Blair Road  
Apison, TN 37302

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Aren't rivers waterways to be used by people for recreation and to view its beauty? If people are allowed to walk by and play in rivers, they should be allowed to canoe and kayak down them also to view its beauty. It is not like you are depleting the natural resources like fishermen do which would harm the river and water life living in the river. Canoes do not destroy the ecosystem like fishing does.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 23:06 Hours (Server time).**

From: Chuck Neese  
Email: chuckneese@netzero.com

Telephone Number: 678-417-0029

Street Address:  
5845 The Twelfth Fairway  
Suwanee, GA 30024

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I love to trout fish and some of my favorite places to fish are the headwaters of the Chatooga. But, I am also an avid whitewater paddler and frequently paddle section 3 and 3.5 of the Chatooga as well as Warwoman in my OC1. During these many trips I do alot of fishing with a spinning rod and fly rod. I see no problems with boaters and other users on the sections above Highway 28. I fish this area alot and you have to realize that when people are fishing people are not boating because of water levels. Also, paddlers leave no traces of there presence. Several times paddling the Nantahala River I have actually had people catch trout right beside my boat as I floated by. In every instance of paddling on streams throughout the country for the last 30 yers that I

encounter people fishing I always make sure I give them plenty of room, this is the case that I see other paddlers doing as well.

I would be glad to discuss my positions in detail.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 22:37 Hours (Server time).**

From: Joe Gildea  
Email: Gildeajoe@aol.com

Telephone Number: 678-309-0098

Street Address:  
2440 brooks ct  
smyrna ga 30082

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I would like to be able to paddle the headwaters. Paddlers will not be there during the times that present users will be. It has never been shown that whitewater paddling has had a negative impact on any free flowing watercourse. I have participated in many river cleanups and will always take out more trash than I bring in. Paddlers are responsible stewards of their chosen playgrounds and never fail to protect what nature has blessed us with.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 21:47 Hours (Server time).**

From: Allen Pogue  
Email: r.allen.pogue@prodigy.net

Telephone Number: (423)580-0737

Street Address:  
189 Laferry Lane  
Ringgold, GA  
30736

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I am an avid kayaker, and a taxpayer, and do not believe the upper Chattooga should be restricted from non-invasive use by recreational paddlers. I also have a perception that the ban on floating the upper Chattooga is not fair and represents specific bias favoring some advocacy groups over others. The purpose of the forest service is to provide access and manager natural resources for ALL interested groups. Any outcome that favors one or a few groups over others is neither fair

nor LEGAL. Recreational paddlers are typically conscientious about non-polluting practices, do not use up any wildlife resources, and do not require the building of extensive trails or other infrastructure to support their activities (maybe at the launch and take out but not elsewhere). Please consider opening the upper Chattooga to float trips. By the way, I would consider a LIMIT to possibly be reasonable, but not a BAN, especially if the same is not imposed other stakeholders. Thanks.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 21:30 Hours (Server time).**

From: Russell Buskirk  
Email: russellbuskirk@msn.com

Telephone Number: 843-364-3580

Street Address:  
66 Cypress st  
Charleston, SC 29403

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have been kaayaking the Chattooga for 10 yrs (section III and IV). I support AW in their goal to open the headwaters to kayakers. I have been a member for 8 yrs. This is a PUBLIC resource, please allow us to use it. There will be little or no conflict with fishermen and others because of the use at different levels of water for each activity. PLEASE LET US USE THIS PUBLIC RESOURCE

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 21:17 Hours (Server time).**

From: Will Gosney  
Email: will@aarc.net

Telephone Number: 770-560-3600

Street Address:  
2274 Salem Road 106-119  
Conyers, GA 30013

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I think that it is only fair that this area should be open to all users that are compatible with the environment. Responsible boaters have a proven track record of taking care of the rivers they paddle on. They are careful to not leave a trace of their passing whenever possible and usually end up removing litter left by other groups. Paddlers are safe

and considerate of others. It is a quiet activity that actually leaves less impact than hiking or fishing. Thank you

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 21:20 Hours (Server time).**

From: Newton Tilson  
Email: ugadelta98@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 770-868-9299

Street Address:  
157 VFW Dr.  
Watkinsville, Ga 30677

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Dear sir or madam,  
I am writing to express my unaltering stance on this issue; recreational boaters are being discriminated against so that a small number of fishermen and other interested parties are allowed total access to a National Resource. I grew up in the Headwaters region, spent about 24 of my 31 years there in fact, so I know this issue well- and I find it ridiculous that a taxpaying, eco-conscious person like myself is not allowed to enjoy the whitewater and natural beauty of the Headwaters. Sure, I can hike it, but it is not the same experience- the Headwaters are a magical place, and 99% of the paddling community are ecologically grounded enough to realize that, which is why boating will occur with minimal ecological impact. Please keep in mind that there are hundreds of local paddlers who are being ignored in this issue- our rights do not seem to have the same validity as those of fishermen and swimmers. How is that?

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 20:58 Hours (Server time).**

From: Dr. Lawton H Salley Jr.  
Email: lawtonsalley@charter.net

Telephone Number: 864-332-0528

Street Address:  
204 Graylyn Dr.  
Anderson, SC 29621

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

PRIVATE boaters are excellent stewards of the river. It is part of our culture. In fact, I challenge you to name one single river that has been

adversely affected by PRIVATE boaters. Also, peaceful coexistence between fishermen and private boaters is abundantly evident and, in fact, the norm. I have been boating trout rivers for 15+ years without any incident involving a fisherman. Boaters will mostly be on the river on high water, poor fishing quality days anyway. There is no legitimate justification to continue to exclude us from enjoying this stretch of water. . No excuse

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 19:54 Hours (Server time).**

From: Robert Maxwell  
Email: maxjunk2000@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 770/936-8238

Street Address:  
4677 Andover Court  
Atlanta, GA 30360

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Dear Sir,

The Chattooga Headwater boating ban should be eliminated. There is no logical reason to exclude a low impact sport from the headwaters. The days boating will overlap with fishing is negligible. AND boaters require NO upgrades in facilities to use the headwaters. Therefore, the only reason to exclude boaters is purely political.

However, I do support the elimination of stocking non-native fish in the headwaters and returning the stream fish population back to its original and intended state.

Thanx -- Robert Maxwell

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 20:00 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mark Hammock  
Email: kayaksmokie@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 864-979-0481

Street Address:  
138 Green Acres RD  
Kingston, TN 37763

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

As a kayaker, I would love the chance to see this beautiful stretch of river. The times we would go would be too dangerous for swimmers, and not prime conditions for fishing. If the ban was lifted, I don't see any way we would interfere with any other parties enjoying this natural area. We have other rivers (ex. Tellico, Citico, Little River, etc.) where we paddle past fishermen. There hasn't been a problem there, so I see no reason this river would be an exception.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 19:15 Hours (Server time).**

From: Greg Huff  
Email: greg.huff@comcast.net

Telephone Number: (972) 612-3596

Street Address:  
1705 Papeete Dr  
Plano, TX 75075

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The Chattooga River is truly a gem. It's a thousand miles from my house, but I drive there multiple times a year. I am a kayaker. I would love the ability to explore this part of the Chattooga. I would never do this if I believed it would compromise the area or the fishermen on that stretch of water.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 19:06 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jonathan Mayhew  
Email: jmayhew2@mix.wvu.edu

Telephone Number: 304-582-2568

Street Address:  
PO Box 200  
Harpers Ferry WV 25425

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Maintaining the boating ban in the upper reaches of the Chattooga is an unfair, uninformed, and misguided policy that must be changed. By allowing some forms of recreation (fishing, swimming, hiking) and disallowing others, the US Forest service has failed in its duty to serve the public; rather than manage these publicly owned resources in a way that allows for all Americans to enjoy them, the US Forest service has deliberately acted in a biased way, pandering to fishing interests who feel that they alone have the right to enjoy this waterway.

Officially, the US Forest service cites a need to preserve the Chattooga ecosystem as a primary factor in their decision to ban floating above Highway 28- this argument is clearly false. Kayakers and Rafters, many of which never set foot outside of their boat for the duration of their trip, leave behind no traces of their visit to an area; this cannot be said about hikers and fishermen, the primary benefactors of the Forest Service's misguided policies. Another "reason" behind this ban is the river-use conflict between floaters and fishermen; fishermen feel that allowing users to float down the stream will disrupt their ability to catch fish. This is yet another false argument, which once again ignores fact- to successfully float this section of river, the water levels must be drastically higher than those enjoyed by fishermen (floatable water levels would be downright hazardous to wade in, and the clouding of the water caused by silt runoff in heavy rains makes the fishing bad anyway). As such, fishermen and floaters would rarely, if ever, encounter each other on the Chattooga. Lastly, this policy is unique in that it goes against precedent- in most areas of the country, the US Forest Service not only allows, but encourages, people to float the rivers within their management area- many of these areas are as popular, if not MORE SO, than the Chattooga for fishermen, and few problems have arisen in these areas between these two groups. In closing, I completely disagree with the US Forest Service's failure to ensure equal access for all to the public lands under its management- if you wish to continue the floating ban above highway 28, it would only be fair to ban all other forms of recreation as well.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 18:45 Hours (Server time).**

From: Luke Kenan Thompson  
Email: lukekenan@aol.com

Telephone Number: 828 712 1928

Street Address:  
78 Arlington Street, Asheville, NC 28801

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I would like to state that as both an avid fly fishermen and whitewater kayaker, I cannot understand why boating has been banned above the Highway 28 bridge. I think it is a real shame and embarrassment to the Forest Service policy that both of these activities are not allowed. I have supported myself for the past 6 years working as a fly fishing guide, so I feel more than qualified to state that these two equally important uses of our public land and water are not in conflict with each other.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 18:28 Hours (Server time).**

From: Moriya Beck

Email: mlbeck44@aol.com

Telephone Number: 828-736-4699

Street Address:  
P.O. Box 2625  
Bryson City, NC 28713

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Hello:) Great work getting the releases of the Upper Chattooga Headwaters. I think year round access is a great idea, and can't wait to start boating. This will be a great jewel to boaters in the Southeast and we are greatly looking forward to it. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!!!

Best Regards,  
Moriya

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 18:24 Hours (Server time).**

From: Matt Jordan  
Email: matthewgjordan@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 706-867-9990

Street Address:  
523 Gold Dust Trace  
Dahlonega, GA 30533

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Boating is probably the lowest impact activity that takes place in the Chattooga watershed. Floating down the river does not cause erosion, it doesn't disturb plants or animals, and it will not likely disturb hikers and fishermen.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 18:13 Hours (Server time).**

From: will lyons  
Email: deckedkanu1@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 859 221 8300

Street Address:

P.O. Box 5503  
Brevard College  
Brevard, NC 28712

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

There are many waterways in the southeast which in which fishermen, recreational canoeists/kayakers, swimmers, and other users are able to work together and enjoy these wonderful natural resources. To eliminate one user group is not only unfair and unjust, it creates unnecessary tension between said user groups. The headwaters of the Chattooga river are an incredible place which should be able to be enjoyed by anyone willing to work a little bit to get there (i.e. hike, kayak, etc...). There are many other creeks in this area, such as the West fork of the Chattooga (Overflow) which handle multiple users fine. I do not see why this would be any different. I would hope that you are able to reach a decision which doesn't exclude anyone from being able to enjoy this amazing stretch of river. I do not think increased volume of users will be much of an issue due to the location of the river and logistics involved.

Thank you,  
Will Lyons  
Brevard

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 18:09 Hours (Server time).**

From: jason dillow  
Email: wspreadp58@aol.com

Telephone Number: 8283352888

Street Address:  
34 dawnwood circle  
asheville, nc 28803

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have been running Chattooga Sect. IV for the last two seasons or so. It is honestly a beautiful place to be out in nature and great to enjoy with friends. The ban on the headwater sections really limits what can be enjoyed. Kayaking has changed my life, and has proven to be a healthy, euphoric, and addictive sport which many more could enjoy with more options (rivers) to run. I don't believe boaters would do any harm to the surrounding land of the river, we just want to float in the waters. Thanks for your time,  
Jason Dillow

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 17:39 Hours (Server time).**

From: David Howard  
Email: davidhhoward@charter.net

Telephone Number: 404-697-0520

Street Address:  
POB 921115 Norcross, Ga. 30010

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Please allow for kayaking

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 15:37 Hours (Server time).**

From: Kevin Barnett  
Email: kevin.barnett@ncmail.net

Telephone Number: 828-230-8470

Street Address:  
Asheville Regional Office  
NC Division of Water Quality  
2090 US 70 HWY  
Swannanoa, NC 28779

Message Subject: Public access to the Chatooga River in NC

Message Contents:

Dear Sirs:

It has come to my attention that the USFS is limiting / preventing access to the Chattoga River in NC. You should be aware that the stream and the stream bottom in held in the public trust for the use and enjoyment of all the citizens and guests of the State of North Carolina and that preventing access would be violating that public trust.

Please consider carefully that the waters of teh state and the waters of the US are a national treasure to be enjoyed by all. Preventing that access, we (and I mean "we" as in all public servants) would be negligent in our duties should we fail to provide access to these resources at any time.

Best regards,  
Kevin H. Barnett  
Environmental Chemist  
NC Division of Water Quality

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 17:24 Hours (Server time).**

From: (Chris Robertsenter )  
Email: (chris.roberts@thule.com)

Telephone Number: (336-688-0414)

Street Address:  
(PO Box 488, Lynn, NC 28750)

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

(This valuable resource should be useable to all rec groups. It is discriminatory and just plain not right for one or two groups be judgmental and want to deny access to canoers/kayakers.)

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 17:21 Hours (Server time).**

From: Bryce Yarbrough  
Email: Bryce1236@aol.com

Telephone Number: 770-953-6674

Street Address:  
728 Cagle road  
Marietta, Ga.  
30068

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I believe the headwaters of the chattooga need to be open to whitewater boaters. At the current moment they are just allowed use by some fisherman with deep pockets and well conected politicians. This is unfair and unjust!Boaters would do little harm to the headwaters, and it is highly unlikely that fisherman would be using the river at the same time as the boaters(due to high water). In my experience all over the south it seems to be fisherman leaving thier litter and trash in these watersheds and boaters who often clean it up.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 17:10 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jimmy Nipper  
Email: jimmynipper@mindspring.com

Telephone Number: (360)863-0740

Street Address:  
14822 242nd Dr SE  
Monroe, WA 98272

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I would like to see the section of the Chattooga River that is off limits to boating opened to boating. When I was a resident of Georgia I would boat the Chattooga often, and have backpacked the parts off limits to boaters. If this section was opened to boating I would schedule my vacations back to see my parents during the time when it would be likely that I could paddle this stretch. I really don't see the conflict with other users as there would need to be fairly high water to run the stretch and the fishermen would not be out in that kind of weather (there are always a few hardcore types of any sport that would be out). When the majority of people are there fishing would be a time that the river level would not be suitable for kayaking.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 16:54 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jeff Tallman  
Email: Jeff@Tallman.com

Telephone Number: 864-896-9009

Street Address:  
2358 N Hwy 101  
Greer, SC 29651

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

It is perfectly ridiculous that I am not allowed to kayak above Hwy 28. I have fly fished, backpacked and swam those sections for years. They are classic whitewater runs on a par with the Jocassee Gorges, Wilson's Creek, Tellico, etc... Why does the US Forest Service persist in it's persecution of whitewater boaters? We are the group that has the least impact on the landscape, least intrusive of any user group. Talk about leave no trace! This is that user group. Perpetually, intentionally targeting us for discrimination has got to stop.

It's not like we're asking to introduce snowmobiles to Yellowstone. Paddling the Chattooga is as natural, as peaceful as it gets. Witness the recovery of a canoe in the Earl's Ford area. Do you think if there wasn't a Forest "Service" (AKA: Tree Store) in those days they would have been paddling anywhere the river allowed? The river is allowing us to be there. I am asking with this final request that you allow me to proceed across the waters and enjoy my day without your ridiculous targeted ILLEGAL discriminatory rule.

Thank you very much.

Jeff@Tallman.com

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 16:53 Hours (Server time).**

From: Geoff Kohl  
Email: gskohl@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 404-457-3517

Street Address:  
13204 Marrywood Court, Alpharetta, GA 30004

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I'm a fisherman, hiker and a kayaker. I've enjoyed this section numerous times with a boots and/or backpack, I think it would be appropriate use to allow kayaking. Many of the other streams I've fished have had kayakers and I think that when we encourage users of all types (hikers, campers, fishermen, kayakers), we develop an overall appreciation that spreads beyond our interest group and helps encourage protection of similar areas of beauty. We need to encourage all usergroups (OK, I'm opposed to ATVs ripping up through the trails) to enjoy these lands that we as Americans have preserved.

**Posted on Thursday, December 8, 2005 at 11:15 Hours (Server time).**

From: Charles Bacon  
Email: cfbacon@alltel.net

Telephone Number: 706-779-3861

Street Address:  
Rt. 3, Box 196, Martin, GA 30557

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I urge you to continue to keep that portion of the Chattooga River north of Highway 28 closed to rafts, kayaks, and canoes, while open to fishermen. Not only do the rafts, kayaks, and canoes interfere with the fishing, they interrupt the quiet and solitude that is an important part of the fishing experience on that part of the river. In my opinion, there is adequate area below Hwy 28 for rafts, kayaks, and canoes.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 0:08 Hours (Server time).**

From: Brandon Hughett  
Email: brandon@knoxflight.com

Telephone Number: 865-938-9965

Street Address:  
3518 Pocatello Lane  
Powell, TN 37849

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The Chattooga River above the highway 28 bridge should be open to kayaking and canoeing activities. The whitewater sport is another way of exploring the great outdoors. Non-motorized canoes and kayaks cause little or no harm to the environment and are considered a clean mode of transportation through the wilderness. Kayaking and canoeing should be allowed on the Chattooga River above the highway 28 bridge.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 8:04 Hours (Server time).**

From: Stephen Zerefos  
Email: sgz@rbparch.com

Telephone Number: 330-646-7235

Street Address:  
1770 Beechwood St NE, Warren Ohio 44483

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Kayakers should be allowed the same access as fishermen, hikers & others. To assume differently seems to be patently unjust.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 8:23 Hours (Server time).**

From: penny  
Email: pennie@insightbb.com

Telephone Number: 502-899-9493

Street Address:  
2604 Frankfort Ave

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I feel that canoeing and kayaking access should be implemented on the Chattooga River above the Highway 28 bridge. It is not fair that access to other recreational sports are allowed and some not unless there is some type of research to back it up. I also know boating is less evasive than hunting and fishing (killing the wildlife) on a designated Wild and Scenic River.

Thank you, Penny Kephart

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 8:41 Hours (Server time).**

From: Harriss Cottingham  
Email: riverfalls@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 864 386 9083

Street Address:  
107 croft st greenville sc 29609

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Kayaking the Chattooga river has been a wonderful time for me. Not be able to paddle this section of the river takes away from the whole Chattooga experience. The wonderful thing about the river is that it is wild and scenic. I believe that paddling groups our the ones who help keep the river net and clean. I know when my friends and i paddle we always are taking trash that we find out with us. The impact of kayaking the upper section would be minimal at best. Thanks for the opportunity to let us be heard. Harriss Cottingham

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:09 Hours (Server time).**

From: Kemper Begley  
Email: kemperbegley@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 865-354-2096

Street Address:  
229 Cates Road  
Rockwood, TN  
37854

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Dear Mr. Cleaves,  
I am a whitewater kayaker who would like to have the opportunity to paddle the Upper Chattooga River. Please consider American Whitewater's appeal to allow non-motorized watercraft to travel the Upper Chattooga. During your capacity analysis, please bear in mind that whitewater paddling is a low impact activity. Paddlers only want an opportunity to

enjoy the Upper Chattooga for a brief time and then leave without altering the beauty of this excellent resource. Thank you for your time.  
Kemper Begley

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:26 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mike Harvell  
Email: Rollcaster@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 787 529 8556

Street Address:  
(enter your mailing address)

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

River Zoning Time Line:

1. Pre 1974 trout were stocked by SC and GA from Highway 76 Bridge to NC Line; winter and spring fishing was very good in the lower sections and remained excellent in the head waters year around.
2. US Forest Service request states trout stocking to stop below Long Bottom due to conflicts with users with the documented increase boat traffic.
3. US Forest Service ban boating above Highway 28 Bridge to separate fisher and boaters to avoid user conflicts, (zoning was supportive of river's ability to serve users, head waters had year round fishing and the lower water had more periods where water level allowed floating). Boaters lost the head waters and the fisher lost the lower water! User conflict resolved!
4. The 1985 Forest Plan continued the user segregation policy established approximately 10 years early to avoid conflicts!
5. What has changed in 30 years? Increase boat traffic on the lower sections with user conflicts between non commercial and commercial boat users of the section II, III and IV, more fishing pressure in the head waters, more other users like hikers, sight seeing, campers, birders, etc. A current working Comprehensive Management Plan for the various river fishing zones including one of the first South Carolina regulation area Delayed Harvest Sections next to "put and take" and "put and grow" management areas. (GA has several streams classified as Delayed Harvest). The regulated area required a change in the South Carolina law and is enforced by both GA and South Carolina Wildlife Officers.

6. The capacity for the river to accommodate user groups has reached saturation without compromise to the classification and charter of the river. Lets put personal wants aside and do what is best for the river; trial runs must be conducted below Highway 28 Bridge by allowing pre 1974 historical stocking points to be stocked again for the trial runs; collection data must be performed on user conflicts where historically the user conflicts existed prior to zoning for separation of user groups due to often and violate conflicts. The aggression of rats packed in a confined space increases as the density of the rat's increases

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:26 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jamie Higgins  
Email: jmhiggins\_99@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 404-508-0761

Street Address:  
1217 Sherrington Dr  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083

Message Subject: Chatooga Access

Message Contents:

The Forest Service needs to allow whitewater boaters access to all of the Chatooga river. The sections of the Chatooga in question is a highly technical whitewater stretch and isn't runnable often. Very few whitewtaer boaters would even venture to run this section of the river, but they deserve an opportunity to run it. It's unfair to the boating community to allow fishermen and hikers access to the river, but not whitewater boaters. Their environmental impacts to the river will be minimal.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:25 Hours (Server time).**

From: Matthew Christie  
Email: ncclimber@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 828-299-8686

Street Address:  
381 Buckeye Cove Rd  
Swannanoa, NC 28778

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

As a fly fishing guide and an avid kayaker, I believe that a mutually beneficial decision can be reached regarding the use of the incredible

Chatooga Headwaters. Kayaking is a sport that in all actuality will have little to no effect on the fishery or the fishermen. On the days that kayaking in the upper headwaters would be pursued, few if any fishermen would be present due to the difficulty of wading the high water. Conversely, days that would be appropriate for fishing, would not be boatable due to the low water. I believe that all user groups including kayakers, should be allowed access to the Chatooga headwaters. Please consider lifting the ban on kayaking in the Chatooga headwaters.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:36 Hours (Server time).**

From: kathy stege  
Email: kstege@stantec.com

Telephone Number: 478.955.3422

Street Address:  
2201 Kingsley Dr.  
Macon, Ga 31204

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I believe non-motorized, non-commercial trips of private boaters with limited group size should be allowed year round

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:51 Hours (Server time).**

From: Chuck Gregory  
Email: ChuckG@dnr.state.ga.us

Telephone Number: 404-656-6539

Street Address:  
2 MLK Jr. Drive  
Suite 1352 East  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I support access to canoeing and kayaking on the Chattooga above the Highway 28 bridge. The reasoning to restrict only specific user groups I believe is discriminatory and should be reassessed. Thank you

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:43 Hours (Server time).**

From: Greg Woosley  
Email: gwoosley@insightbb.com

Telephone Number:

Street Address:  
2025 Tara Lane  
Lexington, KY 40514

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I am a whitewater kayaker, and consequently very interested in the Forest Service's review of the Chattooga headwaters management plan. Although I live over five hours from the Chattooga River, it is important to me that all sections of the river be open to kayakers.

I travel extensively to kayak the great rivers of the southeast United States (and beyond), and the Chattooga is certainly high on that list. Although I still enjoy sections of river such as Chattooga Section III and IV, my ability to spend weekends paddling is limited. Therefore, I try to limit my experiences to more remote and challenging sections of river - those that offer seclusion and a chance to truly commune with nature.

The Chattooga River Sections O and OO perfectly fit this requirement, and I hope to soon be adding them to my paddling destinations.

Please give whitewater paddlers the opportunity to experience this spectacular resource in the manner we most enjoy.

Thank you.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 9:55 Hours (Server time).**

From: Christian Sanders  
Email: csanders@kcc.com

Telephone Number: 404 315 7858

Street Address:  
1278 Fork creek Trail  
Decatur, Georgia 30033

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

It is my personal feeling that the t access to the wild of North America, in particular river access, should never be denied but should rather always be appropriately managed for the use of all interestes.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:00 Hours (Server time).**

From: Ben Harris  
Email: bharris320@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 828-231-9997

Street Address:  
15 Forsythe St.  
Asheville NC 28801

Message Subject: Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

There is no reason kayakers and fisherman/swimmers can not share the Upper Chattooga. The groups would not be on the river at the same time. Kayakers want the river high (muddy) and fisherman/swimmers want the water low and clear!! Every fisherman knows that there is no fishing when the water is muddy and that would be the only time kayers would be on the river.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:18 Hours (Server time).**

From: Adam Goshorn  
Email: ru\_jeepman@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 256.634.1049

Street Address:  
679 County Road 614  
Mentone AL 35984

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Whitewater paddling has very little impact on the environment compared to other forms of recreation. In addition, because whitewater paddlers only use streams like the headwaters during high water and often in the coldest parts of the year... the interaction and conflict with other users would be minimal.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:07 Hours (Server time).**

From: Keith Farley  
Email: keitheye@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 843-881-2578

Street Address:

855 Houston northcutt Mt Pleasant SC 29464

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Im so tired of continuing to fight for the ability to backpack/flyfish in solitude. Without someone drifting through trout holding areas ect. Im sure if trout fishing and back country hikeing /camping caused a dewatering of the whole C. River the boaters would be upset. I also like to paddle / kayak. But I would like the sections to remain as they are and have been historically. Please see former Francis Marian and Sumter National Forest supervisor Don Eng"s appropriate comments.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:28 Hours (Server time).**

From: Greg Hawkins  
Email: gmhawkin@vcu.edu

Telephone Number: 804.233.5859

Street Address:  
Greg Hawkins4203 Springhill Ave  
Richmond, VA 23225

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

This is in regards to opening the Chattooga Headwater to whitewater paddlers. There is no reason for this banning of whitewater paddlers from headwaters section of this river. The impact of paddlers is no more than that of fisherman or other river users. This area is not a privately owned playground for one group but a publicly owned and regulated area. There has to be some type of middle ground here where all can access and enjoy it. Please open the Chattooga Headwaters to whitewater paddling.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:58 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mackay Salley  
Email: msalley1@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 8645989535

Street Address:  
708 Springdale Dr.  
Spartanburg SC 29302

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I am an avid kayaker and enjoy fishing as well. I have spent many days on the river where I have seen paddlers and anglers coexist with no problems. I can't think of any logical reasons to ban paddling of the river that would not include banning fishing the river either.

Please lift the ban of floating the Chatooga Headwaters.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:52 Hours (Server time).**

From: Hank Klausman  
Email: klausgp@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 770-587-0499

Street Address:  
874 Hyde Road  
Marietta GA 30068

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have been floating, canoeing, kayaking all sections of the Chattooga River below Highway 28 bridge since 1972. I don't understand why the upper sections are not available to non-motorized and non-commercial floating. There would be no significant ecological impact to allow floating. I believe this restriction is arbitrary and should be repealed.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:48 Hours (Server time).**

From: Larry Ausley  
Email: lausley@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 919.368.2151

Street Address:  
6717 Valley Woods Lane  
Cary, NC 27511

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I support American Whitewater's appeal to allow year-round access for self-guided groups of non-commercial, non-motorized canoeists and kayakers on the upper reaches of the Chatooga River above the Highway 28 Bridge. The recreational paddling community of users has well demonstrated that its non-consumptive uses of similar resources can be supported by wilderness areas and that such responsible uses provide

great social and political support to protect these areas for future generations.

--Larry Ausley, Carolina Canoe Club President

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:45 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mark Calcagni  
Email: laughingtotem@mindspring.com

Telephone Number: (706) 754-6882

Street Address:  
(enter your mailing address)

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I live in Habersham County but spent a great deal of time in the Chattooga Watershed area. I enjoy paddling the lower reaches of the River greatly but I also enjoy hiking the pristine beauty of the river between Whitesides Mountain and Burrels Ford. I'm a nature and landscape photographer by avocation and the areas above highway 28 are very important to me. I have also hiked streams and rivers throughout the Southeast including many in the Smokies, Nantahalas and other ranges in the Southern Appalachians that are frequented more often by paddlers than any other users. Based on these hikes I've become convinced that paddlers have the smallest impact footprint of all recreational users.

Large groups are generally avoided by paddlers because of the necessary safety considerations, the time spent in any given spot is minimized due to the speed at which kayaks move, fairly noiselessly, through any area and finally in the case of portages around obstacles paddlers stay in or as close to the river bed as possible in order to avoid carrying their boats through the rhododendron hells that line most southeastern creeks.

I have recently started selling some of my photographs and one of the most popular is one of the Upper Chattooga Narrows. I want to see this stretch of river stay beautiful but see paddling as the least damaging way of viewing these areas.

Mark Calcagni

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:55 Hours (Server time).**

From: Barry Grimes  
Email: bagrim1@uky.edu

Telephone Number: 859-623-9067

Street Address:  
124 Hilltop Dr., Richmond, KY 40475

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I feel it is imperative that limited private boating should be allowed on the sections of the Chattooga River currently closed to private recreational boaters during the Visitor Use Capacity Analysis period.

Actually allowing boating in order to analyze it's impact seems not only obviously self evident, but also has been a widespread and standard practice employed when a renewed hydroelectric relicensing plan considers incorporating whitewater boating.

In addition, allowing boating during the Visitor Use Capacity Analysis will serve all interest groups by providing a data set and gathering arrangement that is based upon open, empirically collected scientific data.

An integral part of the collection of user data in this instance should obviously also include the observation and collection of river levels via river gages at both the Bull Pen Bridge and Burrell's Ford access points. These gages will be vital in determining when water levels are both favorable and unfavorable for boating those stretches of river. The collection of river level data during the entire during the Visitor Use Capacity Analysis period will almost certainly provide evidence that these sections of the Chattooga River remain at levels considered too low for recreational whitewater for most of the year.

Should it be determined that limited or restricted use of this area should be enacted because of its Wilderness or Wild and Scenic status, then this limited or restricted use must apply to all users.

If it is determined that a fee or registration is required by users of this area, then this fee or registration must apply to all users.

It is my hope that by allowing boating during the Visitor Use Capacity Analysis period will not only allow for the collection of valid, empirically collected data essential to finding an equitable solution for protecting the wild and scenic aspect of the river for all users but will simultaneously provide the scientific proof necessary in order to quell the divisive, emotional and mostly unfounded opposition of a few individuals to opening the upper reaches of the Chattooga above Highway 28 to private recreational whitewater boating.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:56 Hours (Server time).**

From: Harrison Metzger  
Email: jahmetz1@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: (enter your phone)

Street Address:  
177 Hall Road  
Horse Shoe, N.C.\  
28742

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have several comments. First, I have not been able to attend any of the meetings so far because they are held during the week during hours when I and most other working people who live outside the immediate area cannot attend. This would seem to skew the attendance in favor of those who are retired or live in the local area, and that I believe would skew any results you get in opposition to boating on the headwaters.

There seems to be a lot of confusion about the scope of this analysis, judging from some of the comments posted on your bulletin board. A number of the fishermen seem to be under the impression that the USFS can let the ban on boating stand and not also restrict other uses. This is clearly not the case. Either all uses are restricted or none.

I will ask you the same question I have asked several times: What is it about the upper sections of the Chattooga that makes this the only section of river that flows across National Forest land in the United States where whitewater boating is not allowed? Why here and nowhere else?

We all know this history of how this ban came about, and it does not comply with the principles of the National Wild and Scenic River Act.

The anglers' desire never to see a boater on the water is certainly not justification for singling out one form of non-motorized, low impact outdoor recreation to be banned. There is and never has been any justification for this unfair, illegal discrimination against whitewater paddlers. The water levels on the river will self-regulate the situation.

It is hard to imagine any form of recreation that is more "no trace" and compatible with wilderness than human powered canoe and kayak paddling. We do not want you to do ANYTHING to the river corridor above 28. We want no additional launch facilities, roads, or building of any kind. We simply want to be able to enjoy, from our boat, an outstanding and beautiful stretch of whitewater river.

There is no way you can study or analyze boating on the river while continuing to exclude boaters. I urge the Forest Service to immediately open the Chattooga Headwaters to private canoe and kayak paddlers this winter so that you (and the fisherman) can see how little impact we will have.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:47 Hours (Server time).**

From: Sean O'Malley  
Email: omalley@ohio.edu

Telephone Number: 740-593-1555

Street Address:  
4724 Angel Ridge  
Athens OH 45701

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I recently perused many of the public comments on the Chattooga headwaters issue, both in your online archive and on the public message board. I am amazed at the number of extreme viewpoints expressed, as well as at the number of wild assertions used to support those viewpoints. Rather than contribute yet another dubious data point to that collection of 'noise,' I'd like to provide a straightforward explanation of my own experience with boating and wilderness areas. This experience falls into three major areas: impact, conflict management, and safety.

Non-commercial paddling is an extremely low impact way to enjoy riparian wilderness settings. Paddle craft, be they canoes or kayaks, travel silently and in most cases leave no trace of their passage. There are no 'consumables' like leaders, monofilament, or lures involved in traversing a stretch of river. All gear that enters with a paddler is retained. In fact, many boaters often leave popular rivers and creeks with more cargo than when they began, by virtue of collecting bits of flotsam and trash left behind by other, less environmentally conscious user groups.

Private boaters seldom experience conflicts with other user groups, especially on more difficult stretches of whitewater. On novice runs like Antietam Creek in Maryland, it is common practice for boaters voluntarily to avoid the crowded fishing weekends that follow trout stockings. Personally, on the rare occasion that I encounter a fisherman on a low volume stream, I always pause upstream and communicate with the individual to identify the best route for my passage. On difficult runs like the Chattooga headwaters sections, this would be a non issue, as the levels needed to make the headwaters navigable for watercraft would make fly fishing both unproductive and potentially unsafe.

In fact, the presence of whitewater paddlers on difficult stretches like the Chattooga headwaters can improve safety for non-paddling user groups. As a general rule, individuals who choose to run class 5 whitewater tend to have excellent swift water rescue skills and are capable of making crucial decisions quickly and efficiently. Even a casual examination of incident reports from locations where non-paddling user groups intersect with class 4 and 5 whitewater will show numerous

instances where paddlers have effected successful, often life saving rescues of errant hikers, swimmers, fishermen and sightseers.

As has been demonstrated all across the country, non-commercial paddling represents a low impact, low conflict, and safe form of outdoor recreation. River paddlers in general are excellent stewards of the lands and waters they pass through, they interact well with other user groups, and their presence on difficult river sections has a side benefit of increasing safety for non-paddlers. As such, I ask that the Forest Service reconsider its ban of boating on the upper sections of the Chattooga River.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 10:52 Hours (Server time).**

From: Tiffany Mozingo  
Email: Tiffgringa@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 8643568836

Street Address:  
20 Carr Stree  
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Message Subject: CHATOOGA HEADWATER COMMENTS NEEDED:  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/fms/forest/projects/chatt.shtml#form>

Message Contents:

I support American Whitewater's appeal to allow year-round access for self-guided groups of non-commercial, non-motorized canoeists and kayakers on the upper reaches of the Chatooga River above the Highway 28 Bridge. The recreational paddling community of users has well demonstrated that its non-consumptive uses of similar resources can be supported by wilderness areas and that such responsible uses provide great social and political support to protect these areas for future generations.

--Tiffany Mozing, Carolina Canoe Club Cruise master

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:08 Hours (Server time).**

From: Richard Millea  
Email: kayak10@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 812-284-3484

Street Address:  
6309 Hwy 60  
Sellersburg IN 47172

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I urge all involved to move forward to remove the unfair restrictions that target a specific user group of the Upper Chattooga reaches. Equal access is the only reasonable solution.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:12 Hours (Server time).**

From: Joseph Bery  
Email: jmbbmj@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 336 288-5531

Street Address:  
1705 Brookcliff Drive  
Greensboro, NC  
27408

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Please consider kayaking as one of the uses of the river. We are very low impact on the river and the environment. We can all respect and enjoy this beautiful river.

Respectfully,  
Joseph Berry

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:23 Hours (Server time).**

From: Chan Jones  
Email: Nckayakkid14@mchsi.com

Telephone Number: 828-421-1081

Street Address:  
Chan Jones  
122 West Blvd  
Franklin, NC 28734

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Whitewater boating should be allowed on the Upper Chattooga. The stretches that are currently illegal to boat are hidden treasures in the whitewater mecca of the Southeast. Boaters don't have any more negative affects than sportsmen do on the land, in fact, they probably have less impact on the area. Boaters would only be on the upper Chattooga during periods of high water, when the river level is dangerous to fisherman to wade across. Please lift the current ban on paddling the upper Chattooga.

Thanks

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:46 Hours (Server time).**

From: William

Email: Jones

Telephone Number: 864-423-5467

Street Address:

3765 Patterstone Dr. Alpharetta GA 30022

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I think it is very important to consider all users in a use plan and not bar one of the groups from enjoying something that their government has sought to preserve for the use of all of its citizens. Especially if that group of self guided canoeists and kayakers is one of the groups that cares the most about the river and its quality. This groups interests aren't going to change the experience of the other groups for the most part. This is because the times when the group of kayakers and canoeists would use the river are only maybe 10-20% of the time at the most when there is enough rain. Please lift the boating ban, kayaking is not a crime is a way of life.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:17 Hours (Server time).**

From: Sean Kennedy

Email: skennedy@propertyservicegroup.com

Telephone Number: 865-748-0980

Street Address:

504 Stone Road

Knoxville, TN

37920

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

It makes no logical sense to me at all, that whitewater kayaking is banned on the upper sections of the Chattooga river. No where else in a national forest in the country bans whitewater paddling on the rivers. The national forests were designed to allow for recreational activities for the public to enjoy...whitewater boating probably has the least enviornmental impact of any of the allowed uses on this river section, and boaters are only there during high water...when fishermen are likely not to be there...so they don't really disturb anyone. It just doesn't

make any sense...they even allow paddling in the Smokies National Park..an international biosphere reserve!!!  
The laws need to change so that paddlers can access this treasure in the Chattooga headwaters...we will never stop fighting for our rights to use this public resource, it is OUR (yours and mine) land.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:19 Hours (Server time).**

From: Eric Olle  
Email: eric.olle@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 586-322-1527

Street Address:  
2475 Madison Road  
Unit #50  
Cincinnati, OH 45208

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have been to the Chatooga river several times this year (and previous years) to kayak section IV at a range of different water levels. I believe that there should be unlimited year round access to the headwaters.

The headwaters are an awesome spot for all activities there is no logical reason why kayaking should be restricted while other non-motorized sports are allowed full access.

The Chatooga Headwater have been successfully kayaked multiple times in kayaks over 20 years ago. To restrict access based on water levels is not for anyone except for the whitewater boater to decide. Is fishing regulated based on water level? No. The people fishing know/learn the best times and levels to enjoy their sport. The same allowance should be provided to whitewater boaters.

One problem may be with user capacity with different sports. I have found in hundreds of days kayaking that there is usually very little overlap between kayaker, hikers and fishers. This is due to water levels that are good for fishing are not (usually) good for kayaking.

Full unlimited year-round access should be granted to whitewater boating. Allow the competent boaters decide when they kayak just like other sports are allowed to decide their fate.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:09 Hours (Server time).**

From: Trevyn Leighton  
Email: tlleight@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 9192705798

Street Address:  
40A North Circle Dr  
Chapel Hill, NC  
27516

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have several comments. First, I have not been able to attend any of the meetings so far because they are held during the week during hours when I and most other working people who live outside the immediate area cannot attend. This would seem to skew the attendance in favor of those who are retired or live in the local area, and that I believe would skew any results you get in opposition to boating on the headwaters.

There seems to be a lot of confusion about the scope of this analysis, judging from some of the comments posted on your bulletin board. A number of the fishermen seem to be under the impression that the USFS can let the ban on boating stand and not also restrict other uses. This is clearly not the case. Either all uses are restricted or none.

I will ask you the same question I have asked several times: What is it about the upper sections of the Chattooga that makes this the only section of river that flows across National Forest land in the United States where whitewater boating is not allowed? Why here and nowhere else?

We all know this history of how this ban came about, and it does not comply with the principles of the National Wild and Scenic River Act.

The anglers' desire never to see a boater on the water is certainly not justification for singling out one form of non-motorized, low impact outdoor recreation to be banned. There is and never has been any justification for this unfair, illegal discrimination against whitewater paddlers. The water levels on the river will self-regulate the situation.

It is hard to imagine any form of recreation that is more "no trace" and compatible with wilderness than human powered canoe and kayak paddling. We do not want you to do ANYTHING to the river corridor above 28. We want no additional launch facilities, roads, or building of any kind. We simply want to be able to enjoy, from our boat, an outstanding and beautiful stretch of whitewater river.

There is no way you can study or analyze boating on the river while continuing to exclude boaters. I urge the Forest Service to immediately open the Chattooga Headwaters to private canoe and kayak paddlers this winter so that you (and the fisherman) can see how little impact we will have.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:55 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jeff Wilson  
Email: j2owilson@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 803-413-7314

Street Address:  
429 Timbermill Dr  
Lexington, SC 29073

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I would just like to ask that in your Analysis, please consider the kayaking community as a communitiy that cares about the river, environment, and safety. I think it would be great injustice to continue the ban on private boaters on this section of river. Commercial boating I can see, but private boating should be allowed.

Thanks for listening.

Jeff Wilson

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 11:54 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jon  
Email: Crain

Telephone Number: 502-214-0366

Street Address:  
1025 English Ave  
Louisville, KY 40217

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I am a kayaker from Kentucky and I come to visit the area as often as I can. I come down to paddle Section 4 of the Chattooga River. I would love the oppurtunity to come paddle the more difficult sections of river that lie in the headwaters of the watershed. I do not understand why the sections have banned boating. Please consider opening this section of the river to non-motorized boaters.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 12:00 Hours (Server time).**

From: Charlene Coleman  
Email: cheetahtrk@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 803-240-9886

Street Address:  
3351 Makeway Dr  
Columbia, S.C. 29201

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

John, Stephanie, Joe, Mike, Jerome,

These are my personal comments as a taxpayer and member of THAT organization, American Whitewater.

First, and most importantly, I don't appreciate the negative connotation always inferred when you mention American Whitewater and the Appeal.

Since 1995 AW has done everything you told us we had to do, we have followed the process and run the gambit in the "chain of command". We have followed your rules. The Chief upheld our Appeal and said you didn't do your homework. There wasn't any supportive data. Don't get mad and brow beat us because we did it by the book.

No one likes to be pointed at publicly and told they didn't do something right, especially after 10 years of work. A wise man told me, "do everything you do, right the first time and you won't have to do it again. That way it takes only half the time."

American Whitewater is a National Organization, comprised of educated people that deserve, at least, the level of concern and respect you show TU.

AW is volunteers, business leaders, educators, community service employees, politicians, students, doctors, lawyers, CEO's, blue collar workers (that keep America running) and parents. We have earned the right to be treated fairly and with an equal level of respect.

In your own surveys (boater and fishermen), we are comprised of the nearly the same demographics. The only notable difference, which TU loves to throw in our face, is money spent on funding projects, such as stocking trout each year. Since we don't have the funds TU has available, AW has offered, repeatedly, volunteer skills and manpower as a partner in this Forest, as done over the rest of the nation.

Presently your tone has pitted every user group against us. You set the tempo, temperance and example.

Why should AW's members trust this process when the example you set, always makes us appear the bad guy, trouble maker, greedy, aggressive, irresponsible inner city gang.

Personally I think you owe us at the least a public correction and an apology would hurt either. You are the Federal Government and should always take the higher ground and never seem petty or vindictive.

What we are asking is not unreasonable. We want the opportunity for user trials of every kind, with like requirements and analysis. Considering it has never been done in the areas we are discussing, it is more than reasonable and legally supported. Some computer generated model only insults the public's intelligence and is further proof you consider us second class citizens.

Again I remind you these are my personal comments and not as an official representative of American Whitewater.

Sincerely,  
Charlene Coleman

Stephanie the number is 803-240-9886

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 12:48 Hours (Server time).**

From: John Pinyerd  
Email: jpinyerd@cs.com

Telephone Number: 770-575-1433

Street Address:  
4781 Karls Gate Dr.  
Marietta, GA 30068

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I strongly support a new plan allowing year-round access for self-guided groups of non-commercial, non-motorized canoeists and kayakers.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 12:43 Hours (Server time).**

From: John Eskew  
Email: jeskewcms@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 770-490-5985

Street Address:  
6727 Capitola Farm Road

Flowery Branch, GA 30542

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Restricting boating on the Section above 28 on the Chattooga has been a terrible decision.

Kayakers would only use the section during heavy rains and during this time fisherman would rarely use the river anyway.

Boaters I know are some of the most environmentally friendly people in the SouthEast. I have frequently had to clean up trash left by fisherman on all areas of the Chattooga.

I'm willing to share the river with fisherman and other users. Why does the forset service want to restrict use? In my opinion it is because a lot of the people in charge are trout fisherman and have an elitist outlook on what they consider "their" river.

In short, keeping boaters off the headwaters is elitist an unamerican. You don't own the land the people do. Thanks, John Eskew

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 12:52 Hours (Server time).**

From: Matthew Havice  
Email: matthew.havice@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 864-940-8102

Street Address:  
1004 Hopkins Avenue  
Pendleton, SC 29670

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The upper headwaters of the Chattooga are indeed a very special place. There can exist a common ground between all user groups. Growing up in Walhalla allowed me to experience these areas throughout my life. I have on many occasions fished in these upper stretches of the Chattooga. I have also spent a large amount of time kayaking the lower stretches of the river. The water levels that would be required to navigate the headwaters would in turn make those sections almost impossible to fish. So to me there seems to be no clear reason why these two activities can not co-exist. There have not been issues between fishermen/women and kayakers on the lower sections, so I do not understand why it is "inevitable" that there would be conflicts and issues on the upper sections. I think that at the time the ban was developed it was a good idea to limit recreational uses on the upper stretches. I now feel that the times have changed and that the legislation governing these areas! should reflect that.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 13:16 Hours (Server time).**

From: Judy Ranelli  
Email: juder@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 205-222-1561

Street Address:  
2305 Arlington Crescent Apt. B-3  
Birmingham, Al 35205

Message Subject: Chattooga Headwaters Access

Message Contents:

Please open access to the upper Chattooga Sections for boaters. I am a kayaker who spends several weekends a year on the Chattooga. Opening the headwaters will mean more access to the beauty of the Chattooga wilderness. Fishermen will not be affected because we will only boat when the water is too high to fish. Opening the upper Chattooga to boaters will also create the only multi-day whitewater expedition-style trip in the Southeast. Please please please let us boat the Chattooga Headwaters and give Georgia a world-class paddling resource!

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 13:17 Hours (Server time).**

From: brad roberts  
Email: badswim@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 770-801-1538

Street Address:  
5234 suffex green lane  
atlanta ga 30339

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Dear Sirs,  
I am in favor of advocating kayaking and other whitewater usage above hwy 28. Allowing access to the upper reaches of the chattooga is long overdue.

Thank you  
Brad Roberts

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 13:34 Hours (Server time).**

From: Katie Riddle  
Email: katiejane1977@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 678-471-1730

Street Address:  
2486 Constance Street  
East Point, GA 30344

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

People should be able to kayak/canoe Chattooga sections 00,0, and 1. There would be negligible impact on the environment...even less than fishermen

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 13:42 Hours (Server time).**

From: Ed Stamm  
Email: na

Telephone Number: 770.821.2400

Street Address:  
64 Perimeter Center East, Atlanta, Ga. 30346

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The supposed impact that boating on the headwaters of the Chattooga will be minimal. The only way to study this impact is to allow boating on these parts of the river. It will be shown that we have minimal impact on the river.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 13:13 Hours (Server time).**

From: Ryan Zimny  
Email: cars\_suck@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 218-626-1365

Street Address:  
1326 99th Ave W  
Duluth, MN 55808

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The upper Chattooga River should be available for responsible whitewater access by private citizens. There is absolutely no reason ethically or environmentally to withhold public waterways from any user group who has proven they can act responsibly.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 13:15 Hours (Server time).**

From: Chris Singletary  
Email: csinglet@mix.wvu.edu

Telephone Number:

Street Address:  
233 Beechurst Ave #3  
Morgantown, WV 26505

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I think the current status of regulation on the Chattooga headwaters should be revoked and whitewater paddling should be allowed. As a recreater I feel it is unfair to reserve the use of the river for soley fishermen and swimmers. The Chatooga is a fantastic resource that should be open to any form of use, including kayaking.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 13:41 Hours (Server time).**

From: Patrick Chambers  
Email: chambjp@charter.net

Telephone Number: 423.619.4255

Street Address:  
4543 Conner Creek Dr.

Signal Mtn, TN 37377

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

There is no logical, scientific, societal, moral, legal reason why this ban should exist. The only time kayakers or canoers are going to paddle this section is when the river is high which would make the fishing bad. It doesn't make any sense to me why this ban is in place. thanks

Patrick

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 14:01 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jeffrey C. Hatcher  
Email: jhatcher\_md@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 336-358-2498

Street Address:  
5200 Northland Ct  
McLeansville, NC 27301

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Whitewater users are aslow impact as the fishers that you are allowing to use the forrest. They are also tax payers that are bering unfairly denied access to this beautiful resource.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 14:18 Hours (Server time).**

From: (John Schroader)  
Email: johnrschroader@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: (270)926-4734

Street Address:  
(2805 Settles Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have enjoyed paddling (in a kayak) many of the streams in the area and would certainly like to experience these waters. In my fourteen years of kayaking, I conclude that this boating community is one of the most environmentally concious groups of people I have ever met. Far more so than anyone else I encounter. Please do not deny us the same priviledge that so many others take for granted - to enjoy this beautiful stream. Thanks.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 14:28 Hours (Server time).**

From: Ken Strickland  
Email: (enter your email)

Telephone Number: (enter your phone)

Street Address:  
POB 63  
Morganton, GA 30560

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I'll begin by sharing a couple of passages from larger personal works inspired by the river:

"Wonderfully difficult are these hidden pathways of water as they fall pell-mell through the mazes of rock and rhododendron. Inexhaustible is the lure of their beauty, challenge, mystery, and power, and it is to this that we are inextricably drawn."

And:

"It was late when I peeled away from the smooth wave and headed downstream. While paddling the remaining few miles to the takeout I thought about my past several decades of kayaking. I thought about the exciting times and I also remembered with fondness the friendships I had made along the way; those special, unconditional attachments that naturally spawn whenever kindred spirits meet. But most of all I thought about this constant called the river and what it meant to me. I realized that whenever my life gets difficult... jagged... edgy... I always turn to the river for it lays the edges—smoothes things out—just as it does to the stone, and I hold a reverence for its very existence."

I've read with interest (as well as chagrin) many of the posts on both this and the bulletin board that are in opposition to private boating above the Highway 28 Bridge. It's obvious to me that many here do not understand (and some even question the existence of) the respect for the streams that flow through the backcountry that I and my kind hold. We've been thrown in with beer-swilling tubers, trash chunking bumpkins, and commercial interests bent on alchemizing silver from water, when in reality nothing could be further from the truth. Our environmental impact could be compared to that of a log floating downstream after being loosened by a rain event, and when the portage or scouting of a rapid becomes necessary, it is more often than not carried out on the exposed bedrock. Obstacle logs and natural debris are usually paddled over or under whenever possible, and simply portaged when not; amongst most backcountry paddlers the positive environmental significance these natur!

al dams have on stream fauna is well known and respected.

Of course there is the argument that a paddler's impact is not necessarily an environmental one, but rather one of an invasion of personal space. I counter argue that my being prohibited from descending a river during favorable conditions (high water) that flows through a National Forest and a Public Lands area has a negative personal impact upon me; an impact far more legitimate and profound than the aforementioned one: that of being totally banned. The special interest group that presently holds sway on the upper reaches of the Chattooga has a closed door tenet: We're in; close the door! It doesn't matter to them that a legitimate user group (by definition non-commercial, non-mechanical, and non-motorized) is being discriminated against; that this single group is being denied access to a Natural Resource they rightfully have access to.

The additional claim by some that increased rescue situations (and therefore cost to the taxpayer) would occur because of paddlers being on the river is simply not true; there is no evidence to back up this claim. In fact, paddlers are well known to take care of their own when the need arises, and most are well versed in the various elements of swift water rescue as well as how to deal with a wilderness emergency medical situation. I will put forth the statement that paddlers as a group are more self-reliant in the backcountry than most other user groups. On a stream reach similar in difficulty (actually more so) to that of the Chattooga headwaters (Overflow Creek and the West Fork of the Chattooga at Three Forks) there have been no boating fatalities and no instances of where rescue squad or USFS resources were required, and this after nearly thirty years of being boated on a regular basis. On a related side note: For several years a USFS sign was located on the roadside a!

adjacent to the brink of Tellico Falls in Tennessee. It warned: CAUTION! EIGHT PEOPLE HAVE DROWNED HERE. A sad and tragic statistic to be sure, but I must point out that none of them were boaters. The fatalities were primarily recreational swimmers; however I understand that at least two of them were fisherman in waders that had been swept away while fishing the stream at higher water.

In my chosen craft of the kayak, I have now followed the enchantment of the River Siren for nearly three and a half decades. This fantastic journey has taken me over much of the Eastern United States as well as into the American West. I've also ventured into Central and South America on several occasions, so please do not slight me by questioning my respect for the magic carpet upon which I ride or the milieu through which it passes, my knowledge of where safety begins and its applications, or the soulfulness of the experience I seek in my own way.

I feel that it is now time for a Solomon-like entity to step up and work out a plan for the Chattooga headwaters, a plan that will acknowledge and accommodate all user groups who qualify under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Wilderness Act. This could very well involve setting parameters of use for groups with differing philosophical views, as well as do away with any illegitimate sense of entitlement or possession that one group might hold over another.

I would like to comment on the proposal to allow boaters on the Chattooga River above the Hwy 28 bridge. I may be one of the few who has a foot in many worlds-paddling, fishing, and hiking. I have been an avid whitewater boater. I have run rivers all through the Southeast, and in California, Oregon, and Colorado. I have worked summers as a River Ranger in the Klamath National Forest (I was based in Happy Camp, Ca.). I was a slalom racer for a number of years and had the privilege of competing against world and Olympic champions. I also am a hiker and backpacker. I have hiked most of the AT in the Southeast. And I am an avid fly-fisher. Because of having an interest in all these worlds, I want to make sure that each has a share of the Chattooga River.

As it is now, boaters have section! s 2, 3, and 4. As you know, section 2 is an easy beginner/intermediate run. Section 3 is a fantastic intermediate/advanced run. Section 4 is world class whitewater. All in all, my estimate is over 24 miles of boat-able water with everything from flat water to world class rapids. Too be honest, the boaters don't need any more water.

Whitewater boaters have also been given the Tallulah Gorge and the newly released Cheoah river in North Carolina. Along with the Ocoee and the Nantahala, French Broad, and numerous other rivers, boaters are not lacking for paddling in the Southeast.

The Chattooga is unlike any river in the Southeast for fishermen and hikers. A wilderness river with some size that you do not have to worry about a screaming group of rafters or boaters destroying your wilderness experience. The fishing is fantastic and the hiking is wonderful. Hikers can walk in peace, fisherman can fish in peace. Boating that section of the Chattooga would take that peace away and distroy the fishing experience.

I fear that the addition of canoes, kayaks, rafts, C-1's in colors of orange, yellow, red, and purple will ruin the quiet nature of the Chattooga for the fisherman, campers, and hikers who love its solitude. One section of the river needs to be left alone, set aside for those who only use their feet to get to it, and to let the quiet pursuit of trout happen without

being ruined by whitewater boaters. Boaters have 3 sections of the river. Please reserve one section for those who love to fish, camp, and hike in peace.

JD Forrester  
40 Stonehedge Dr.  
Buford, GA 30518

Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 14:54 Hours (Server time).

From: Ellis Cucksey  
Email: ellis@nrsweb.com

Telephone Number: 208-883-1473

Street Address:  
2009 S. Main St.  
Moscow, ID 83843

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I don't feel that kayakers subtract from a wilderness solitude setting any more than any other user would. I don't understand the logic of banning a user group from a wilderness setting because they somehow damage the access to solitude, but the other hikers and fishermen already in the area somehow don't.

I don't believe that kayakers "spook" the wildlife any more than any other user would. While it may be true that some kayakers "hoot and holler" their way down the river, that is hardly the norm, and it can also be said that some people in general are much louder than others, no matter what the setting. Some people might like to chat or whistle or sing while they're hiking through the woods. Those folks spook the critters every bit as much as an excited kayaker, and both are equal examples of disrespect for their surroundings and fellow users of the area. If a hiker or fisherperson is being disrespectful to other users with their volume, they should be dealt with individually, not by banning their entire community from the area based on a perceived disrespect. I don't understand why kayakers as a group are being handled as though they affect the solitude of any one user differently than hikers or fishermen.

And from the experience of 8 years kayaking, I've seen more wildlife (cougar, bear, deer, elk, moose, bobcat, as well as much smaller animals) from the seat of a kayak silently floating past the shore, than I ever have walking through the forest. I can't seem to walk as quietly as I kayak, I guess.

Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 15:32 Hours (Server time).

From: Dallas Shaw

Email: lithium@lithiumkayaking.com

Telephone Number: (770) 949 1887

Street Address:  
2968 blake ct  
Douglasville GA  
30122

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

There is no legal or logical reason that boating the Chattooga headwaters should be banned. It's like banning trout fishing on section III..... there would be no reason for it.

**From:** Jon Forrester [mailto:clanforrester@yahoo.com]

**Sent:** Friday, December 09, 2005 3:09 PM

**To:** jcleeves@fs.fed.us

**Cc:** Khris Allen; Rob Amato; Nick Cassidy; James Childers; Chris Coleman; Sam Crampton; Daniel Flowers; Ken Graham; Mark Kratz; Mark Kratz; Adrain Martin; Bob Murrah; Will Newman; Olin Sargent; Michael Toalson; Mike Williams

**Subject:** Boating on the upper Chattooga

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I would like to comment on the proposal to allow boaters on the Chattooga River above the Hwy 28 bridge. I may be one of the few who has a foot in many worlds-paddling, fishing, and hiking. I have been an avid whitewater boater. I have run rivers all through the Southeast, and in California, Oregon, and Colorado. I have worked summers as a River Ranger in the Klamath National Forest (I was based in Happy Camp, Ca.). I was a slalom racer for a number of years and had the privilege of competing against world and Olympic champions. I also am a hiker and backpacker. I have hiked most of the AT in the Southeast. And I am an avid fly- fisher. Because of having an interest in all these worlds, I want to make sure that each has a share of the Chattooga River.

As it is now, boaters have sections 2, 3, and 4. As you know, section 2 is an easy beginner/intermediate run. Section 3 is a fantastic intermediate/advanced run. Section 4 is world class whitewater. All in all, my estimate is over 24 miles of boat-able water with everything from flat water to world class rapids. Too be honest, the boaters don't need any more water.

Whitewater boaters have also been given the Tallulah Gorge and the newly released Cheoah river in North Carolina. Along with the Ocoee and the Nantahala, French Broad, and numerous other rivers, boaters are not lacking for paddling in the Southeast.

The Chattooga is unlike any river in the Southeast for fishermen and hikers. A wilderness river with some size that you do not have to worry about a screaming group of rafters or

boaters destroying your wilderness experience. The fishing is fantastic and the hiking is wonderful. Hikers can walk in peace, fisherman can fish in peace. Boating that section of the Chattooga would take that peace away and distroy the fishing experience.

I fear that the addition of canoes, kayaks, rafts, C-1's in colors of orange, yellow, red, and purple will ruin the quiet nature of the Chattooga for the fisherman, campers, and hikers who love its solitude. One section of the river needs to be left alone, set aside for those who only use their feet to get to it, and to let the quiet pursuit of trout happen without being ruined by whitewater boaters. Boaters have 3 sections of the river. Please reserve one section for those who love to fish, camp, and hike in peace.

JD Forrester  
40 Stonehedge Dr.  
Buford, GA 30518

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 15:46 Hours (Server time).**

From: JB Seay  
Email: jbseay@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 304 288 3033

Street Address:  
712 Madison Ave,  
Morgantowen, WV 26501

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I would like to comment in favor of the American Whitewater appeal for allowance of non commercial, non motorized boating on the upper reaches of the Chattooga River.

I kayak rivers recreationally in remote forest settings, such as the Dolly Sods Wilderness area and the Otter Creek Wilderness area of WV, and have witnessed no significant negligible impact from whitewater boating, particularly in comparison to that of other forest users, such as fishermen or hikers/backpackers.

Please make boating in this area legal.  
Thank You!

J.D. there is no way that I could have put it any better than you did. Mr.. Cleeves, please take into consideration what J.D. has said and know that there are a great many of us that feel the same way.

Thank you.

Will N.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 16:06 Hours (Server time).**

From: John Kern  
Email: johnkern240@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 6785226032

Street Address:  
1308 Whitt Road  
Lookout Mtn, GA 30750

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I'd like to see the ban lifted and the access restored. Boaters are a very consciencuous group (for the most part) and will take good care of the land, respect the presence of others and work with the park service to resolve any issues.

John K

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 16:20 Hours (Server time).**

From: Brian K. Jones  
Email: brian.k.jones@gmail.com

Telephone Number: 336 413 6998

Street Address:  
1138 Edgebrook Dr.  
Winston Salem NC 27106

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The ban on boating on the Upper Chattooga is an incredible mismanagement of the river. It selectively favors one user group over another and this should not be allowed to continue. There are no other National Wild and Scenic Rivers where this is allowed to take place - a fact which demonstrates the shameful "good 'ole boy" rationale that led to the original ruling. Please repeal the ban on boating upstream of highway 28.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 18:11 Hours (Server time).**

From: Wes Yow  
Email: gwyow@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 864-906-1493

Street Address:

13 Renforth Rd  
Simpsonville, SC 29681

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Paddling should be allowed on the Upper Chattooga River. A boating ban is unnecessary. Kayakers and canoeists will not be a detriment to the conservation of the area or watershed. Our rivers are an important resource and kayaking does nothing negative to impact that environment.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 21:26 Hours (Server time).**

From: (Ben Waller)  
Email: (resq3man@yahoo.com)

Telephone Number: (864) 7573520)

Street Address:  
(59 Wheat Field Circle, Bluffton, SC 29910)

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

(I am fully in favor of opening the Chattooga to floating in Sections I, O, and OO - i.e. above Highway 28. I don't think the impact will be great, as the high water necessary to float this section only occurs a few days each year. Boater access to the Upper Chattooga is inherently self-limiting. Boater impact at high water will be minimal, as the primary interface is between a boat and the water, which leave no trace of passage except for the put-in and take-out, and possible an occasional portage. However, that impact is much less serious than trail erosion from hikers, anglers, and other day users who travel primarily by trail. Boaters are a VERY environmentally sensitive group that doesn't typically leave trash, scat, fishing line, lures, and weights, etc. in the water or in the trees.

Boaters are without a doubt the most safety-minded user group you'll see on the Chattooga headwaters. I think that this controversy has been artificially created and slanted, primarily by one non-boating group. This seems to be an attempt to maintain the Upper Chattooga as their private preserve, and this needs to change.

If the deciding factor is angler-boater conflict, a suggestion has been made that will totally resolve it. Give the two conflicting user groups sole access to the headwaters for alternating 30-year time blocks. The anglers have had their 30 years, so it should now be the boater's turn.

The BEST option is to realize that the anglers and boaters will seldom or never be on the river at the same time, and the chances for conflict and overuse impact will be correspondingly small. Likewise, the numbers

of paddlers on the headwaters will never approach the use levels on Sections II, III, and IV, due to the river not being conducive to rafting or to use by less than advanced paddlers.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.)

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 21:35 Hours (Server time).**

From: Shane Benedict  
Email: shane@liquidlogickayaks.com

Telephone Number: 828 698 5778

Street Address:  
108 Meadowcrest Dr.  
Flat Rock, N.C. 28731

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Whitewater kayak paddling is one of the lowest impact activities that can be done in the river corridor.

What is it about the upper sections of the Chattooga that makes this the only section of river that flows across National Forest land in the United States where whitewater boating is not allowed? Why here and nowhere else?

Paddlers would only go to this section of river when the water levels are high which generally means less desirable fishing, and often times means cloudy water because of runoff.

As for overcrowding. This section of river will never see very high traffic because it is remote enough and difficult enough to deter unskilled paddlers.

The river should be open to paddlers. It is another way for people to see a beautiful area.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 21:44 Hours (Server time).**

From: Brent Summerfield  
Email: daggercascade@wmconnect.com

Telephone Number: 828-891-1554

Street Address:  
11 Ravenwood Lane  
Horseshoe, NC 28742

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The upper sections need to be open for canoeists and kayakers to use.

12/08/05

Mr. John Cleeves  
Project Coordinator  
Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests  
4931 Broad River Road  
Columbia, SC 29212

RE: Upper Chattooga River / Appeal by American Whitewater for Access

Dear Mr. Cleeves:

I am of the understanding that the American Whitewater Association is seeking access to the upper portion of the Chattooga River between the Whiteside Cove Road bridge over the river to the area below, known as Corkscrew Falls. Having grown up fishing and hiking along this part of the river, I would respectfully ask that this appeal be denied for several reasons:

This section of the river is quite impassable by boat, as many log jams and small to medium size waterfalls and gorges make up a great deal of the rivers uniqueness in this area. The well kept beauty of the river and its banks in this area would only be harmed by boating and portaging traffic. The activities that I and my family have enjoyed on this part of the river such as fishing, wading, picnicking, searching for river life under rocks and logs would no longer be enjoyed in the safety and solitude that we have enjoyed for over four generations.

Being an amateur kayaker and canoer myself, I certainly respect the desire of boating enthusiasts to enjoy appropriate waterways. This part of the Chattooga, however, does not meet the criteria of navigable waters and would only put at risk the rivers ecosystem as well as the enjoyment of activities listed above. Again, I would ask that you **not** recommend boating access to this section of the Chattooga River.

Respectfully,

Edward A. Gibson, Jr.

Edward A. Gibson, Jr.

928 New Haw Creek Rd  
Asheville, NC 28805

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 22:43 Hours (Server time).**

From: Skip Orr  
Email: skip.orr@mac.com

Telephone Number: 864-859-6950

Street Address:  
203 Shefwood Drive  
Easley, SC 29642

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

In reference to allowing boaters on the Upper Section of the Chattooga, I feel that the ban has been in place too long. Boating has less of an impact to the environment than almost any other outdoor activity.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 23:08 Hours (Server time).**

From: John Farrell  
Email: wcurfc@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 678-880-0764

Street Address:  
329 Park Creek Ridge

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Let the upper chattooga be open to whitewater boating.

**Posted on Friday, December 9, 2005 at 23:44 Hours (Server time).**

From: Hayley Botts  
Email: sassybotts@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 865-938-6898

Street Address:  
3736 Tillbury Way  
Knoxville, TN 37921

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The beautiful outdoors of the United States should be preserved for all generations to come. However, recreational areas preserved for only a select group of people is unfair and wrong. The Chattooga River above the Hwy 28 bridge should be open not only to fisherman but to non-commercial boaters in non-motorized crafts such as canoes and kayaks. I hope that you will allow canoes and kayaks on sections 0, 00, & 1 so that future generations will have an additional way to explore the beautiful great outdoors of the United States of America.

**Posted on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 9:25 Hours (Server time).**

From: Danny Yarbrough  
Email: Garff321@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 828-593-8677

Street Address:  
158 Howell Cove Rd.  
Canton NC 28786

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Please allow me and my family the right to kayak a very nice river.

JD – your letter was well written and based on first hand experience from both worlds.

Mr. Cleaves – it is precisely these kind of on-going abuses of our natural resources that has encouraged me to sell my house in Georgia and move westward to be able to enjoy peaceful surroundings without the constant barrage of rafters and boaters. The Chattooga is a precious resource that should be left as it is.

M1 / JD – will miss the meeting this week due to travels again.

Mike Toalson  
Suwanee, GA

Posted on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 10:03 Hours (Server time).

From: matt scruggs  
Email: mascruggs188@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 29307

Street Address:  
5031 Clifton Glendale Rd Spartanburg SC, 29307

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I Have heard the arguments that kayaking would disturb the habitat if allowed on the head waters. This couldn't be farther from the truth. Paddlers are less intrusive than the fishermen that now use this section of the river because we rarely disturb the bottom where the trout make there homes. Almost every Kayaker I know is very Eco-Conscience and would never leave liter behind and display a great respect and love for our natural resources. I hope that you ,who make these decisions, will look closely at our track record on and around the Chattooga and not just believe what is said by those seeking to keep us off of the waterway. In closing I feel it is important to add that we don't want to limit where and when fishing is allowed and believe that all uses of the river can coexist peacefully. Thank you and God bless. Matt Scruggs

**Posted on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 11:01 Hours (Server time).**

From: Robin Sayler  
Email: RobinSayler@Comcast.net

Telephone Number: (912) 631-7065

Street Address:  
Post Office Box 121  
Meldrim, Ga 31318

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have been a paddler for 35 years, and consider the Chattooga as my 'home' river. I have had the pleasure and thrill of paddling all of the Chattooga headwaters many times, and never once saw another user group in all of my trips. The argument of different users groups having occasional is blown way out of proportion. To exclude one group of users from this unique experience is grossly unfair.

**Posted on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 12:41 Hours (Server time).**

From: Bernard P. Elkon  
Email: bpelkon@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 404 373-7535

Street Address:  
443 Lakeshore Dr., NE  
Atlanta, Ga 30307

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I would like to offer the comments of a boater with a few decades' worth of experience.

First of all, I probably will never run my boat down the section in question. I'm just not good enough to do it, and I don't really want to get thumped in an area that remote. I suspect that many of us who are weighing in on the issue are in a similar position. We didn't do it when we were young and stupid, but we would like for others to have the choice. Generally, boaters who would consider this stretch have the experience to make this kind of decision. We're a pretty self-policing bunch, as those of us who don't think clearly about safety sooner or later abandon the sport one way or another.

Folks do seem to be quite concerned for our safety, though, so I thought I'd point out that Overflow Creek is run pretty often, and it doesn't seem that USFS resources are used frequently in rescues there, even though Overflow Creek is arguably in the same general level of difficulty.

It's also unlikely that we will heavily impact the area. Section 4 of the Chattooga sees far more visits by boaters than this section would, and in three decades of visits I have yet to see serious impact. Even the trash is far more common close to the parking areas, although I sometimes throw something that someone left behind in my boat.

There is also the issue that this stretch has been restricted for people who fish. That may be a good thing. I've been hit by a cast fishing lure several times on the lower stretches. The difference is, on the upper stretches, you would rarely find fishermen and boaters on the river at the same time. The upper stretches, having a much smaller watershed, are only runnable during or shortly after a rain, when the water is turbid, the current is fast, and fishing stinks because the fish are waiting under the rocks and can't see lures or bait anyway.

Lastly, it is just plain unfair that boaters are the only group restricted from using the Upper Chattooga. Fishermen may use it. Hikers may use it. Plenty of people use the roads and parking. Why can't the few dozen boaters who might be up to that challenge use the area?

Peter Elkon

**Posted on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 17:09 Hours (Server time).**

From: Amos Glen  
Email: amosivey@netzero.net

Telephone Number: 828 584 6060

Street Address:  
113 Doe Run  
Morganton, NC 28655

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I think the Upper Chattooga River should be open to kayaking and canoeing. There is no good reason for the ban. Canoe and kayak float/paddle transportation is extremely low impact. The vast majority of

people who partake in this sport do not litter or deface the natural scene.

**Posted on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 17:38 Hours (Server time).**

From: Josh Werts  
Email: joshwerts@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: (828)713-1101

Street Address:  
238 Bent Creek Ranch Rd, Apt D  
Asheville, NC 28806

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

As a kayaker that has paddled section III & IV and Overflow, and hiked much of the upper sections of the Chattooga, I see no reason to ban this portion of the river from kayaking. I do not believe kayaking will have a negative impact on the river, and would support limiting uses of all groups over banning one particular low impact group. In addition, these sections are no more difficult than other class V runs in the area as far as safety and navigability are concerned.

Thanks for receiving comments!

Josh Werts

**Posted on Saturday, December 10, 2005 at 21:29 Hours (Server time).**

From: Josh Guske  
Email: jguske@elon.edu

Telephone Number: 828-837-0659

Street Address:  
830 Harshaw Place  
Murphy, NC 28906

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Boating is undoubtedly the lowest-impact activity that could take place on a waterway and it disturbs me that it would be made illegal before other more destructive activities. We boaters do not alter the streambed, do not touch the banks except at access points, and have no effect on fish and wildlife. Furthermore, with a well-managed access program, boating could generate money.

**Posted on Sunday, December 11, 2005 at 18:14 Hours (Server time).**

From: John Hubbard  
Email: johnnyriver46@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 423-614-7557

Street Address:  
1809 Michelle Dr NE  
Cleveland, TN 37323

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I think the Upper Chatooga should be open to use by all non-motorized forms of recreation within well analyzed environmetally sound limits that preserve the wild and scenic nature of the river and area. It should not be limited to one or a few forms of recreation. That means a plan of use that is compatible for all such non-motorized uses should be developed.

I want to say that I want to see river float trips by kayaks and canoes be equally considered along with fishing uses.

**Posted on Monday, December 12, 2005 at 16:51 Hours (Server time).**

From: Brad Rogers  
Email: brogers@tegron.com

Telephone Number: 864 578-9151

Street Address:  
164 Sandy Drive  
Boiling Springs, SC  
29316

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I approve of the current restriction to watercraft above the Hwy 28. bridge.

As a hiker/fisherman who frequents the area at least 12 times per year, I thoroughly enjoy the experience as it exists today and see no positive impact to allowing watercraft.

As a whitewater canoist, I question the accessibility of the stream above the bridge, the lack of portages around dangerous areas, and the ability to support/provide rescue operations in the area.

**Posted on Monday, December 12, 2005 at 17:15 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jerry Jascomb  
Email: [jjascomb@kcc.com](mailto:jjascomb@kcc.com)

Telephone Number: 770.587.8485

Street Address:  
255 Shady Grove Lane, Alpharetta GA, 30004

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I would like to voice my approval for lifting the boating ban above Hwy 28. Kayaking and Canoeing would be occurring only during periods of heavy rain/high water when fishing activity would be almost nonexistent. When conditions are good for fishing, i.e. lower than boatable flows, there will be no boating occurring above Hwy 28. To deny one group of users access to the river - especially when conditions are very poor for fishing (high water) - is unjustified and unreasonable. Kayakers/Canoeists respect all resource users, respect the environment and cherish the wild places as much or more than others. Lift the boating ban: it makes no sense, it's exclusionary and biased, and has no precedent on other rivers within the S.E. National Forests. A river cannot be managed as a private enclave for an elite few - when all own the resource, especially when boating activity will not have any adverse affect on fishing or other uses.

Respectfully,

Jerry Jascomb

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I am writing to express my agreement with my friend Jon Forrester, who contacted you previously to opine against the opening of upper regions of the Chattooga river to boaters. Like Mr. Forrester, I have been an avid outdoorsman my entire adult life; and have been blessed with the opportunity to guide others in the outdoors as an occupation. I have been an avid kayaker my entire adult life, and have spent many days on the Chattooga River, and many others in the Southeast. Also, like Mr. Forrester, I find great pleasure in wilderness backpacking and fly-fishing. Unfortunately, the number of areas that allow a truly peaceful wilderness fishing experience is dwindling. I have done my share of steep-creek wilderness kayak descents, but have always felt a sense of guilt on the occasion of dropping into a pool where someone had just been attempting to ply a trout with line and feather, knowing I had just ruined not only his chances, but the quiet experience as well. While not considered a high-impact use on the actual river resource, whitewater boaters are definitely the most conspicuous in terms of their impact on other river user groups. Their visual impact as well as the disruptive nature of their passage on fishermen should not over-looked. I never lost sight of this as a boater and attempted to minimize my impact on others, but was not surprised when my polite apologies were not always met with friendly acceptance by those whose experience I had negatively impacted.

In my alter-ego persona as a fly-fisherman, I have for years cherished the experience of quiet solitude afforded by a long walk away from the nearest road. Recently, many of my "safe" spots have been invaded by the growing number of steep water boaters, with the latest radical boat designs, and radical attitudes. I have been "dropped on" by boaters in the most unlikely of places, some of which required long hikes to reach, and yet offered no expectation of solitude. The list of these places is long, and I will not bore you with it. I would attempt to express to you however, you the sadness associated with seeing each one become the new "flavor" for boaters as they hit the guidebooks. A river not choked with brightly-hued adrenaline missiles, allows the hiker or fisherman a glimpse of nature eternal, and a window into days past. Something almost tangible is lost with the shattering of this revelry by modern river conveyance.

As a boater, in the Southern Appalachians, I was always assured that there were more rivers within a few hours drive than I could paddle recreationally in a lifetime. We may have the most canoe / kayak navigable rivers in the most geographically compressed area ***in the world***. The number of rivers (of this size) which allow other user groups to pursue alternate disciplines without disruption, however, are very few. Multi-use is a wonderful concept, but should be applied with some attempt at fairness to ALL user groups. A few spots must be left undisturbed.

Respectfully,

Dan Flowers  
521 Winterberry Trail  
Boone, NC 28607

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 8:41 Hours (Server time).**

From: Ted Cookson  
Email: ejcookso@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 828-697-2411

Street Address:  
267 Highland Golf Dr  
Flat Rock, NC 28731

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The boating ban, in my opinion, on the Chattooga headwaters is unnecessary, unjust, and discriminatory. It should be repealed as soon as possible. Private boaters have established a safety record as good or better than other principal user groups in the Chattooga watershed. They will be visitng the river at times that other users typically stay home, i.e. in the cold and in the rain. Water levels that are sufficient for whitewater boating are typically too high and too turbid & cloudy for productive fishing.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 9:17 Hours (Server time).**

From: Kiley Brown  
Email: kileytbrown@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: (864) 948-1407

Street Address:  
773 Glendalyn Ave  
Spartanburg, SC 29302

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I oppose the boating ban in the Chattooga Headwaters, not only because I am a whitewater kayaker, but because of what the ban represents and that is arbitrary exclusion of one user group because of the personal desires of other user groups.

I have just become aware of this forum and have spent some time reading through past comments, and what I see deeply disturbs me. Over and over, what I am hearing from hikers, anglers, and others who support the ban is essentially that boaters should be prohibited because they don't want to be inconvenienced or disturbed by them. In other words, they are willing to support a ban on folks who they don't approve of. Think of what this kind of thinking represents ... that we live in a country where a group of people can band together and ban another group of people from using public land simply because they don't like this other group of people. Remember, if boaters can be banned based on the arguments I've seen put forth, so can anglers, hikers, or any other group that finds itself in an unpopular position.

Another thing I have seen often among these comments are unfair stereotypes about boaters. In their eagerness to make their case against kayakers, they conveniently paint them all as hell-raising hoodlums that leave a trail of beer cans everywhere they go. I suspect this is true of a certain subset of kayakers just as it's true of a subset of just about any class of people. The fact is the whitewater boating community is also filled with people who are well-behaved, respectful of the environment as well as other people, and who would never leave a bit of trash behind on the rivers they love. In fact, in my two years of boating, most of the boaters I have known or met fall into this latter category. Whitewater boaters, in general, are more than adrenaline junkies ... they are also outdoor enthusiasts and they would no sooner spoil the natural beauty of our wilderness areas anymore than other brands of outdoor enthusiasts.

This ban can simply not be upheld based on environmental impact, safety, or user conflict. Many boaters have already argued these points, so I will give brief mention only. If boaters are to be banned based on environmental impact, then so should anglers and hikers who also leave behind trash, contribute to soil erosion, and more. A boat floating through the water, in fact, has very little impact ... probably less than these other users by far. Safety is simply not an issue. If it were, it would have become an issue long before now on the many other streams that are more remote and difficult than the Headwaters. Overflow, the Green Narrows, and many more are very difficult and remote

stretches of water with very few incidents. Whitewater boaters know their skill levels. Novice and Intermediate boaters simply do not take on expert runs. This is perhaps one of the misconceptions that flow out of the ridiculous stereotypes of boaters as adrenaline junkies and risk takers. On t!

he contrary, many boaters are Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers and Teachers. Many boaters have families. They are out to challenge themselves within their abilities, have fun, experience the outdoors that they love, and return home safely to their wives, sons, and daughters ... not unlike any other groups who choose to experience the outdoors differently. And lastly, user conflict will be minimal. Boaters do not like scraping over rocks. It's not much fun and boats are too expensive to treat in such a manner. Boaters will only be there when the water is at sufficient flow, and that's not many days out of the year on this stretch. Add to that, that most of the boatable days will occur in the colder months when other visitors are at a minimum and that many of these days will likely be weekdays, boating usage will be very limited.

I can see no justification for upholding this ban, and the nature of the comments by most of those who oppose it reveal that their position is motivated by personal desires rather than issues such as environmental impact. If we are to consider environmental impact, safety, and user conflict as legitimate reasons to uphold the ban, then we must, in fairness, also consider banning other activities that can lead to the same problems.

Kiley Brown

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 9:51 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mike Harvell  
Email: Rollcaster@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 787 529 8556

Street Address:  
(enter your mailing address)

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

When boats encounter the stream fisher the fisher is the big loser. The trout memory varies from stock trout to wild trout and from young trout to older wiser more conditioned trout. The exposed feeding trout on aquatic hatch (the most prized condition of fish feeding by the fly fisher) is most affected by the intrusion of boat traffic. Boat users on the US Forest Service web site claim trout have twenty to thirty minutes of memory recall. American Whitewater's anecdotal evidence from their discussion with representatives of Trout Unlimited indicates suppression of fish biting would be a few minutes after a group of boaters has floated past. Would the floater stop their down stream progress for ½ hour on each encounter of a stream fisher? Boaters can easily smile

knowing that their encounter will last on seconds with little impact to downstream floating progress.

Below is a partial list of rivers that I have fished where user conflicts currently existed between floaters and fishers:

South Mills River North Carolina, Nantahala River North Carolina, Section II, and III Chattooga River GA / SC, Saluda River tail water South Carolina, Canyon Lake tail water Guadalupe River Texas, Watauga River tail water Tennessee, Pere Marquette River Michigan, Au Sable River Michigan, West Branch Delaware New York, Madison River Below Highway 87 Bridge launch access Montana, White River Missouri / Arkansas.

Below is a partial list of rivers that I have fished where floating is banned due to possible user conflicts between floaters and fishers, high quality trout fishing, special regulations and / or river / stream condition:

Yellowstone Park Waters, Madison River above Highway 87 launch site to Quake Lake, West Branch of the AuSable River (catch and release section) New York, Beaverkill River New York and section of Chattooga River SC /GA / NC above the Highway 28 Bridge.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 10:28 Hours (Server time).**

From: Steve Williams  
Email: [jstephw@netzero.com](mailto:jstephw@netzero.com)

Telephone Number: 828-507-0679

Street Address:  
P.O. Box 623  
Webster, NC 28788

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have been utilizing the headwaters of the Chattooga River for approximately 26 years as a kayaker and fisherman. I see no conflict in interest between boaters and fisherman. After numerous paddling trips on the headwaters, I have rarely seen fishermen, and when encountered, a polite exchange ensued. The paddlers tried to stay out of the fishermen's way, or apologized for not doing so. As a fisherman, I have never encountered a kayak or canoe on the Chattooga headwaters. Of course, I fish when the fishing is good, ie, the water is low and clear. Boaters in general have a deep appreciation for rivers and the environment. Of course, there will be some in any group of people that don't respect the environment. I have certainly witnessed fishermen trashing the water in which they're wading.

The Chattooga Headwaters should be utilized by all who wish to experience it, not by fishermen only.

-Steve Williams

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 11:22 Hours (Server time).**

From: J. Douglas Sprouse  
Email: jsprouse@theriver.com

Telephone Number: 919-957-1000

Street Address:  
3134 Rowena Ave  
Durham, NC 27703

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

As a forester, conservationist, and kayaker, I would like to voice my support for allowing "year-round access for self-guided groups of non-commercial, non-motorized canoeists and kayakers" to float the Chattooga river above the Highway 28 bridge.

Thank you.  
Doug Sprouse

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 11:17 Hours (Server time).**

From: Ryan Moore  
Email: ryan.moore@gatech.edu

Telephone Number: 8657713881

Street Address:  
Atlanta, GA

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Kayaking is my means of enjoying nature and spiritual places such as the headwaters of the Chattooga. One of the best parts of kayaking is that we get to enjoy the entire length of the river without leaving any trace of our presence. The fact that the Chattooga is Wild and Scenic makes it rare among boatable rivers, and I'd like very much to experience this special place by floating the length of the river.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 11:38 Hours (Server time).**

From: Chuck Neese  
Email: chuckneese@netzero.com

Telephone Number: 678-417-0029

Street Address:  
5845 The Twelfth Fairway, Suwanee, GA 30024

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

After reading some of the comments already posted I am greatly disturbed over so many negative comments about boaters. As stated earlier, I am an avid boater and also love to fish. On many occasions I boat and fish things like Warwoman, Section 3, the upper 'Hootch, the Hiawassee and the Nantahala.

It is amazing to me that the times I have paddled out West I never saw differences between boaters and anglers. They are all there for the same reason, to enjoy the outdoors doing something they love.

Many times, I have witnessed anglers using very poor judgment. However, this does not mean that ALL people who fish use poor judgment. It is amazing that so many people who fish lump all boaters together. This is wrong and just shows how narrow minded these people are and how they are thinking of themselves and not the big picture.

The big picture is that this land is there for everyone to use! It is a privilege to enjoy the many wonders God has created.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 11:42 Hours (Server time).**

From: Kevin Pickens  
Email: pudding021@yahoo.com

Telephone Number:

Street Address:  
1803 Commonwealth Drive  
Woodstock, GA 30188

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

This is in regards to lifting the boating ban above Highway 28 on the Chattooga River. I've been an avid whitewater boater for the past 3 years, and boat all sizes of river and creek throughout the Southeast. In those 3 years I have spent many a wonderful day on the legal stretches of Chattooga, particularly section 4. It is a beautiful and inspiring area, although it is always sad to see the brown stain of the Stekoa coming in. I have

never run Overflow Creek, but I have boated on the nearby Chauga and Tallulah rivers, and hiked in the Elliot Rock wilderness. For me, the best day possible on the water is a remote wilderness run. The Chauga; the Conasauga in the Cohuttas; North Chickamauga; I love these rivers because of their solitude, especially during a heavy rain. You can get to unique places that are inaccessible to any other type of user, because of high cliffs or thick rhododendron. And you can always tell how remote the stream banks really are, by the amount of trash along them. Invariably, if people can hike to it, you will see plastic bread wrappers, bait cups, beer cans; and I and other boaters have shoved plenty of this trash in the stern to pack out, when we've come upon it. On the other hand, in places where there is no foot traffic, it is almost always pristine and wild. Boaters do not want to impair the river. There is too much reverence for the water quality, since we actually spend most of our time in the water. All of this is to say I would like to be able to enjoy a day on the Chattooga headwaters. It's my understanding that the rapids are only in play during a high water level that would make fishing inappropriate. And I think foot traffic from hiking and fishing will have a far greater impact on the environment than boating. Fishermen and boaters already share other rivers throughout the Southeast. We can and should learn to co-exist here too.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 12:56 Hours (Server time).**

From: Sean Cobourn  
Email: sean\_cobourn@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 864 472 5678

Street Address:  
123 Carbandy Drive  
Inman, SC 29349

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I believe the boating ban on the upper Chattooga river should be reversed. The river belongs to all citizens, not just fisherman. The vagaries of weather and water flow will ensure the river is not overcrowded. Sections 2, 3, and 4 are all boated and are hardly crowded. The upper reaches are technically difficult whitewater which should also limit the number of users. I am a boater and an attorney.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 13:39 Hours (Server time).**

From: Brian Jacobson  
Email: bdjacobson@comcast.net

Telephone Number: 770-715-9910

Street Address:  
2064 Old Forge Way  
Marietta, GA 30068

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

This spring I will have 30 years experience on Overflow. In the countless runs on that creek I have only passed a fisherman on the upper stretch one time. The level that day was too low to be enjoyable and I've never been back that low again. I see no reason the Headwaters will be any different.

Watch the boaters on Section IV at high water (2.5+ ft), the river is harder at that level than the Headwaters in my opinion, and you don't see inexperienced boaters, tubers, swimmers in the river. In fact you rarely see anyone besides your group. Most people have good sense not to get in over their head. It's obvious from the comments the Headwaters already have a reputation with the boating community and the community in general. I think use on the Headwaters will be self controlling.

Sections 0 and 1 are generally easier than Overflow. The only places you even need to get out of your boat are SuperCorkScrew, Big Bend Falls, Maytag, and Rock in the Hole in the Wall. At all of these locations you can either walk across the bedrock or on pre-existing fisherman trails (or take the water route). Boater impact is minimal compared to walking on the steep fragile soils of the riverbank trails. Our impact is similar or less than a fisherman wading up the streambed. Fortunately, the nature of our activities allows us to have maximum enjoyment at different times. Low and clear for fishing and high and turbid for kayaking.

Why didn't we fight the restriction 30 years ago? When I was a teenager and we used to regularly run the Headwaters the rules were not enforced. A ranger told me "Yea it's not officially permitted but we aren't looking for you". In my many runs on this stretch I only passed a couple of fishermen, we had friendly conversations (which generally were about how the fishing was not too good today), and one even gave me a ride back to Bullpen Bridge after I lost my keys.

There are all kinds of boaters just like any other group of people but the characterization as thrill seekers unconcerned about nature is a gross stereotype. As I float (I usually float not paddle) and admire the scenery I gain a special bond with the area I've known so well since childhood. I've drifted past doe and fawn, otter, beaver, and bear unnoticed on the far side of the river. More than once I've run rapids backwards to savor the upstream view for a few more seconds. If Overflow is a church and the Rock Gorge a Cathedral I should not be told to stay in the "small church".

The boater use will likely be quite limited. Over the years 1939 to 1998 the Headwaters were accessible (using the 2' criteria) on average 86 days per year. A more likely number for predicting use, since you would not go if the river was dropping, is to look at days above 2.5 ft. This better represents the quick transient flow seen on the smaller headwater streams. Using this criteria results in 24 days a year on the river. Final use patterns will probably be somewhere between these numbers. Is it too much to ask to share less than a month of likely cold rainy days with paddlers?

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 15:32 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mark Calcagni  
Email: laughingtotem@mindspring.com

Telephone Number: (enter your phone)

Street Address:  
(enter your mailing address)

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

This comment is in direct response to Mr. Doug Adams creative, but unrealistic story of the impact three boaters would have on hundreds of other recreational users

Quote

"On that one day, about 100 backcountry visitors and volunteer rescuers experienced some level of user conflict due to encounters with just 3 boats. Numerous wild creatures were startled, their normal routine disrupted. Streamside flora was destroyed. Two men were life-flighted to the Greenville General Hospital and will not return to their jobs for several weeks. The heart of the backcountry was littered with another broken canoe and its contents. Taxpayers were burdened with another rescue, recovery, and clean-up."

First, with regard to disruption of wildlife and destruction of Flora, I must state that hikers and anglers have as great or greater capacity of startling and disrupting wildlife as paddlers, nevermind the disruption and distress caused to a fish by having a hook pulled through it's lip. As a nature and wildlife photographer I've spent many hours sitting silently hidden in foliage observing animals only to be disturbed by curious hikers happening along and loudly saying, "Hey whatcha' doin?" I accept this as part of sharing a resource with users of different motivations. To pretend kayakers are somehow fundamentally different than other users in their mindset, impact and conscience is patently incorrect. We are all users and are all going to affect the wilderness simply by being in it. I believe the impact foot print left by paddlers is smaller than those of most other user groups for two

reasons. First, the constant movement downstream on a medium that bears no scars!

from moving on it. Second, Our time in the wild is much shorter than that of most users. Less use time means less time TO impact the area. Impact tend to occur in areas where people camp, eat, or relieve themselves.

With regard to safety issues I can only point to the number of hikers versus the number of paddlers that need to be rescued on the sections that are paddled. Paddlers tend to be more aware of the fact that what they do can be hazardous. Hikers, in my humble experince tend to take the fact that they are miles from help less seriously.

Finally with regard to trash left behind all users need to police themselves to make sure that follow a leave no trace ethic, regardless of use.

Mark Calcagni

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 16:20 Hours (Server time).**

From: Sam Potts  
Email: sampotts1@earthlink.net

Telephone Number: 8285268272

Street Address:  
PO Box 2542  
Highlands, NC

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I was raised in Highlands, NC. I have had many great experiences fishing, swimming, and hiking the trails on the Chattooga at the Bull Pen Rd. above the Iron Bridge and downriver to Burl's Ford. It's my opinion that these upper reaches remain closed to boating traffic. The experience gained there simply hiking, swimming or fishing is a special one and would not remain so if boating were allowed. With the fact that this section of the river is increasingly more shallow from over-development upstream and a warmer climate, it's hard to believe any boater would want to attempt to float there. It's very important that we keep the upper reaches and the Ellicot's Rock area as pristine as possible. As humans, if we must encroach upon it, it should be for a "quite experience" which allowing kayaking and canoeing traffic would no longer afford. Also, the population of wild trout there is less of a renewable resource than it once was and needs to be protected. Opening the upper reaches!

to boat traffic added to the environmental stress of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, over-siltation, etc. would only increase destruction of the delicate redds the trout need for spawning.

As far as the section from Bull's Ford down to Russell Bridge, I haven't spent enough time there to offer an informed opinion.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 17:19 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mark Buckley  
Email: mcbuckley@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 831 239 4060

Street Address:  
1141 Cleveland St.  
Missoula, MT 59801

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I lived for 7 years near the Chattooga, and still return frequently, to enjoy the region while floating the river. I have backpacked extensively throughout the headwaters and have always dreamed of kayaking the corridor. I feel quite assured that some compromise level of boating must be possible. The timing and level can be a function of streamflow volume, biotic community phenology, and other social demands. As a practicing natural resource economist, I am quite aware of the discrepancies that arise from completely excluding one user-group from an area.

I strongly urge a recognition of the navigational servitude of the Chattooga Headwaters for the public trust.

Mark Buckley,  
PhD Candidate

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 18:30 Hours (Server time).**

From: Dallas Shaw  
Email: lithium@lithiumkayaking.com

Telephone Number: 7704560698

Street Address:  
2968 blake ct  
Douglasville Ga  
30135

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The Chattooga headwaters are a public trust and should be open to the boaters accordingly period. I understand that some people are worried that kayakers will take over "their" river but water levels will dictate when kayakers are there and keep them away 85% of the year. There is no logical reason for the headwaters to be closed to kayakers.

**Posted on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 at 23:04 Hours (Server time).**

From: Colin Martin  
Email: comartin8@hotmail.com

Telephone Number: 404-234-4573

Street Address:  
677 Cumberland Circle  
Atlanta GA, 30306

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Having recently moved to Atlanta from Seattle I was surprised to learn that a river was closed to paddling. Having paddled in Washington and California the only exclusions for paddling on rivers related to certain sections for spawning endangered salmon species. From my understanding of the issues the Upper Chattooga has been closed to paddlers for some time. It does not seem to follow the common practice that the public lands in the US should exclude different groups who want to use them. They are just that public open to everyone. If there is no justifiable natural reason (ie endangered species, which should mean really no one should use) all groups should be afforded equal access to the resources. A balance can and should be struck on the use of the resources. As a taxpayer and a citizen it seems to go against the grain of this wonderful country that we exclude groups from its resources because they are different or not understood by others.