

## Chattooga River Public Comments

Oct. 28 - Nov. 4, 2005

**Posted on Friday, October 28, 2005 at 4:47 Hours (Server time).**

From: Terry Rivers  
Email: tlr1121@alltel.net

Telephone Number: 706 782 7419

Street Address:  
281 Coy Lane Clayton ,Ga.

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

As a flyfishermen and a lover of the Chatooga River and a member of Trout Unlimited and present Chapter President, I have fished the N. Ga. Mountains for the last 25 years. If the boating ban is lifted on this part of the river I not only think there will conflicts of fishermen and boaters, the accidents, inviroment impact, deaths, cost to the local residents for search and rescue, and the lost of a place I could go and visit where there was peace and solitude will be lost forever. I was a part of the process to make the section created for the D.H. and if this ban is lifted I know that all my time and effort I've put in working on watersheds for the Chatooga will be lost, I've never seen a boater at one of our work projects, which they are public info on our web site, to inhance the flow of water to the Chatooga. Please dont let our efforts that we have work so hard for be lost.

**Posted on Friday, October 28, 2005 at 15:07 Hours (Server time).**

From: Skip Foley  
Email: skipfoley@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 803.926.1331

Street Address:  
3330 Spring Dr.  
West Columbia, S.C.  
29170

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I strongly disagree with opening the Chattooga river to boating access above the hwy. 28 bridge. While many of the boating crowd are very conservation minded and considerate people, there is a large percentage that have continually instigated conflict between themselves and fishermen on the rivers where access is permitted both groups. The other problem is the volume of boaters that would use the river if access is allowed. Most of the prime Western rivers such as the Dechutes, Rouge, Salmon, and Snake have had to resort to permit access only after excessive boater use severely degraded the banks and camping sites along the rivers. There is no wilderness experience on these rivers anymore due to the steady stream of paddlers coming downstream. If you want an idea of what the upper Chattooga would look like with open boating access, spend an afternoon in Helen, Ga. on the Chattahoochee. Fishing this stretch in the summer is nearly impossible due to the tubers, Kayakers, etc. P!

Please preserve the last remaining stretch of water off limits to boating.

**Posted on Friday, October 28, 2005 at 17:18 Hours (Server time).**

From: bill knott  
Email: wknott@sc.rr.com

Telephone Number: 803 732-6986

Street Address:  
279 Danby Court, Columbia, SC 29212

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I am against allowing boats above the hwy 28 bridge. As a hiker, and especially as a trout fisherman, I much prefer this upper stretch of the river to lower sections, where a constant parade of boats goes by during peak enjoyment times. The boaters already have the rest of the river, why do they want to degrade this last stretch, too? We need to share this resource for as broad a group of users as possible. People such as myself who seek a more solitudinous outdoors experience deserve a decent chance for said experience. In addition, I consider this appeal a "leading wedge" for eventual commercial use, in spite of what American Whitewater states in its appeal.

Thank you,

Bill Knott

**From:** [Frank Smith](#)  
**To:** [jcxleeves@fs.fed.us](mailto:jcxleeves@fs.fed.us)  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 27, 2005 10:33 PM

**Subject:** upper Chatuge River navigation

I have fished, hiked and enjoyed the Chatuge River around Grimshawes for nearly 40 years. I have seen development take the gravel bottom of the river and change it to a foot of sand. Yet the fishing quality is still there. The river is relatively small, going through several narrow gorges , with 2 major falls. Kayaking this river would be impossible at any water level without portaging onto private land. I know that trespassing will be unacceptable to the owners and the lessees. Confrontation will be inevitable.

We support the Forest Service position that this section of the Chatuge is not navigatable.

Anyone trespassing on this private land will come into harms way!

Thank you for your efforts to keep this river free of kayaks and canoes.

Frank S Smith  
33 White Oak Rd  
Asheville NC 28803

**Posted on Friday, October 28, 2005 at 22:49 Hours (Server time).**

From: Ken Bradshaw  
Email: kshaw01@mindspring.com

Telephone Number: (enter your phone)

Street Address:  
65 Cumberland Way  
Dallas GA 30132

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

It would be great if many of us would realize that "capacity" inherently denotes "maximum". Those that claim to love the resource should remember that maximum use is inherently bad for any environment.

One can see that in any facet of human encroachment.

The river is currently loved and cared for by more than enough people. Is that not enough? Adding another use venue will do exactly what people do best; strangle the resource and open the area for even more demands selfish.

There's more than enough water to play a boat in. Must we always want what the Jones' have?

**Posted on Saturday, October 29, 2005 at 8:21 Hours (Server time).**

From: Jesse DeFrance  
Email: Defjes1@aol.com

Telephone Number: 803-796-4579

Street Address:  
122 Savannah Lane  
West Columbia, SC  
29169

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Dear Folks,

The past few years I have been fishing the upper sections of the Chattooga River. We leave Columbia at 4:00 A.M. and we are getting in our waders around 6:30-7:00. Rain or shine. My buddy and I usually are the only folks in the parking lot, watching the sunrise and tying our flys on the line by flashlights. Nine times out of ten, we start fishing with no one on the river. We fish and wade all morning up stream. We make it up to Reedy(SP) Creek by early afternoon, many times without seeing another fly fisherman? If we do he or she is downstream (late sleeper we call them). The rest of the afternoon is spent fishing and wading back to the 28 bridge, generally following the late sleepers. We do see a tent or two and we try to keep quiet, not to disturb them in the morning. This is one of my favorite fishing trips that allows me to get out enjoy my hobby without being around civilization. That's what all sports men and women are on the Chattooga River for. Floaters and!

fishermen. I have no problem with folks that like to canoe and kayak. They are great sports. If you open the upper section above the 28 bridge, I'm afraid our fishing trip would be interrupted by a boat or two.

Just as the floaters would not want me to interrupt their sport-I'M ASKING-PLEASE DO NOT INTERRUPT WHAT WE NOW HAVE ABOVE THE 28 BRIDGE!  
Thank you for your time.

Jesse DeFrance  
West Columbia, SC  
Saluda River Trout Unlimited

**Posted on Saturday, October 29, 2005 at 13:04 Hours (Server time).**

From: Mike Bamford  
Email:

Telephone Number: (enter your phone)

Street Address:  
PO 2725  
Cashiers, NC 28717

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

The current Chattooga River RLRMP is equitable and reasonable when reviewed in its entirety. An analysis that focuses exclusively on the river's recreation use above Highway 28 devalues the efforts of compromised already considered in the current plan.

I am not suggesting we re-open the entire RLRMP but do think consideration of the entire Chattooga river's recreational use should be factored into any zoning revisions.

**Posted on Saturday, October 29, 2005 at 14:22 Hours (Server time).**

From: Concerned Parent  
Email: (enter your email)

Telephone Number: (enter your phone)

Street Address:  
Cashiers,NC

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Along Whiteside Cove Road (1107) at Grimshaw's bridge is one of the Chattooga River's ,and Cashier's, most popular swim holes. This spot is well known to the locals as "slide rock" or "the beach". Use of the Slide Rock swim-hole dates back to the 1900s when guest of the then Grimshaw's' resort frequented these refreshing rapids.

During any warm summer day the parking lot is overfilled and traffic is parked up to 400 yards away from the Slide Rock swim hole. This stretch of road is treacherous because of the tight curves and frequently ignored 35MPH speed limit. Parked cars along the road only compound the visibility problem as barefoot children scamper along the road to reach the swim hole.

If Grimshaw's bridge were used as an access point for boaters the current parking problem would intensify. While most swim-hole users stay less then two hours, boater's vehicles will remain parked at the bridge for the entire day.

Any consideration of increased use at the Slide Rock area must include adequate parking and avoid dangerous road crossings.

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**Posted on Sunday, October 30, 2005 at 0:08 Hours (Server time).**

From: Dwight Moffitt  
Email: smoffitt@sc.rr.com

Telephone Number: (803)790-5568

Street Address:  
1714 E Buchanan Dr  
Columbia, SC 29206

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Please do not allow boating above the Rt. 28 bridge on the Chattooga River. The upper Chattooga is the only significant trout stream in the SC mountains. Canoeists and kayakers already have access to the best whitewater on the river---can't we have the upper section to fish? Boat traffic on this section of the river would make fishing very difficult--the river is just not wide enough for both. Thank you for your consideration.

**Posted on Sunday, October 30, 2005 at 19:17 Hours (Server time).**

From: Keith Cloud  
Email: keithcloud@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: 803 781-9568

Street Address:  
915 Koon Rd.  
Irmo, SC. 29063

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Several years ago, my first date with my wife was a day trip and picnic on a blustery March day in 1991. Our picnic was around the Bull Sluce area near the Hwy 76 bridge. The Chattooga has always and continues to be a special place within our hearts. Back during that day, I loved trout fishing and enjoyed watching the boaters as they managed the rapids. The boaters basically have this section and while there is a mix of fishing and boating here, lets face it. The boaters have this section. I have fished this section enough to know that my fishing is nearly done, once the boaters arrive. I understand it and I know that comes with the territory.

After that first date with my wife, two years later we returned to the river. It was there that I proposed to her and yes, she accepted. The area above the 28 bridge is a pristine area. I only wish I had known of this area prior to 1991. I may have decided to propose to her there, God only knows. While the river is constantly changing, let it change on its on. This section while appealing to the boaters, is the last section of river devoted to those who love to fish without being entertained by others. You can have a wilderness area that is dedicated to the fishermen, it has worked well for a number of years. No need to change, this should be a very easy decision.

Best Fishes,

Keith Cloud

**Posted on Monday, October 31, 2005 at 6:58 Hours (Server time).**

From: Philip G.Smith  
Email: smitphilip28@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 843 766-4611

Street Address:  
2226 S. Dallerton Circle, Charleston, SC 29414

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

Sir: Allowing floats on section 1 of the Chatooga will degrade the primary trout fishery in SC. This delayed harvest section will ultimately provide a self-sustaining fishery if left free of boaters. Recent experience on a well known western river has shown me that floaters significantly reduce the fishing success of wading fishermen. Sections 2,3 &4 of the Chatooga provide ample opportunity for boaters to enjoy their sport. P.G.S.

**Posted on Monday, October 31, 2005 at 12:46 Hours (Server time).**

From: MEL MAURER  
Email: melmaurer@richlandonline.com

Telephone Number: 803-576-2546

Street Address:  
PO BOX 2272  
IRMO, SC 29016

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

comments) I have backpacked several times into the Ellicott Rock area and hiked downstream on the Chatooga. I would find that area to small and generally to shallow for canoes etc. I think the wilderness aspect of the Ellicott Rock area would lessened with boat traffic on the upper areas of the Chatooga. I believe the current restrictions should be maintained. I have floated the lower Tyger, Enroe, and sections of the Broad Rivers. These areas are much more suitable for canoes etc. I am 59 yoa with suitable outdoor experience to make the above comments. Thanks for the opportunity.

**Posted on Monday, October 31, 2005 at 14:10 Hours (Server time).**

From: John Butler  
Email: jbbiii@bellsouth.net

Telephone Number: 803-256-9661

Street Address:  
116 Silver Lake Road, Columbia, SC 29223

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

I have grown up using the Chattooga River since 1966 and I appreciate all the Forest Service has done to preserve the wild and scenic nature of the river. I have to confess, however, that I am troubled by the possibility that the last restricted section (1) will be open to whitewater rafting. Rafting is pretty much incompatible with many other activities. To open section 1 to rafting will spoil the last sanctuary on the river. I had hoped 3/4 of the river would be sufficient for rafting but obviously not. I would encourage the Forest Service to maintain the diversity of opportunity which it has created and protect the last uncluttered section of the river.

**November 1, 2005**

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

Dear Mr. Cleeves:

I am writing in regards to potential kayak usage of the upper Chattooga River from Grimshaw's bridge downstream.

My father L.T. Betty first leased this property beginning in 1958. It has always been private property, dedicated to family outdoor recreation and I have never seen a kayak or canoe on this stretch of water. There are no fewer than eleven (11) locations (in less than 2 ½ miles) where normal watercraft would have to portage (going downstream; upstream is NOT possible).

Judging from the lower 2/3 of the river where all of this is allowed you can easily see severe damage caused by erosion and littering at all of these portage locations.

Our stretch of the river is small-average 12-16 feet wide and shallow. There would be no room for a swimmer or fisherman and an aggressive boater to safely enjoy the water at the same time. On other rivers I have been almost run over by thrill seeking kayakers; it is not safe to mix these two interests on such a small stream.

Other local streams have successfully fought these same kayakers because of trash, noise, unacceptable behavior and damage to the very fragile environment.

These other cases were dropped at trial time by the kayakers because they feared a precedent setting loss.

Our area is heavily used by our owners and guests for a multitude of family outdoor activities and has been since 1958.

Why do these people need the entire river when they already have the bottom 2/3rds?

The river is not navigable in any sense of the word. To use the kayakers reasoning the downspouts from the gutters at my house are navigable and should be public property for kayaking, canoeing trash throwing, hunting, trapping, etc.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Rest assured our group will fight these people who are determined to destroy our private property tights as well as the pristine Chattooga river.

Sincerely,

E. Mitchell Betty

**Posted on Tuesday, November 1, 2005 at 13:07 Hours (Server time).**

From: Bill Summer  
Email: summer4@aol.com

Telephone Number: 706-346-1233

Street Address:  
1088 Morton Bend Road, Rome, GA 30165

Message Subject: Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Message Contents:

While I am a TU member and rarely paddle, fishing is my favorite pastime. I feel that to deny paddlers while oking fishers is dangerous because if folks can't use something they will have no cause for its existance. If every one can't use it why should they care if they lose it. That is the danger in restrictions on our properties in many national forests

**Posted on Friday, November 4, 2005 at 0:16 Hours (Server time).**

From: Michael Bamford  
Email: (enter your email)

Telephone Number: (enter your phone)

Street Address:

We should question the number of participants in the river recreating activities. Does this really warrant the current level of resources being applied to the LAC analysis?

AWA members and employees co-authored "North Carolina Rivers and Creeks" which was published in 2005. This book designates section "00" of the upper Chattooga as a Class V creek (pg 85). Class V refers to the difficulty of boating a river section; Class V sections are suitable only for the most expert whitewater kayakers ("extreme kayakers").

It should be noted that only 1% of canoeist/kayakers fall into this "extreme" category, and that the size of the entire US floaters (kayaks & canoes) population (3 million)\* is less than 10% the size of the US fishing population (40 million)\*\*. Additionally, one need not be an extreme angler to have the capability to fish the Chattooga headwaters.

Adding swimmers, hikers and nature observers to the group of potential in-river users of the upper Chattooga clearly shows that this effort is not in balance. Opening up the Chattooga headwaters for boating is really a charade to set policy granting a few individuals a disproportionate right-of-way over many others; this will destroy the river for many future users.

Why would an unlimited boating policy on the Chattooga even be warranted for so few potential users? Should a few boaters be allowed to spoil the fishing and swimming for the many?

\* US Coast Guard 2004 Data & statistics.

\*\* US Fish & Wildlife Service 2004

A published view from a kayakers perspective exists for section 00, 0 and 1. Attached is a reference page 85 of "North Carolina Rivers and Creeks", published by Brushy Mountain publishing Inc. this year(2005). The author was Leland Davis and Kevin Colburn was a contributing writer.

I purchased this book in Travelers Rest, SC

Page 84 describes the persecution, by the FS, of the "surf" righteous AWA. (also attached)

Section 00 "This very small creek" is "the most difficult section of the (Chattooga) river". The book mentions the "nasty sieve (Corkscrew falls) which "can be walked" (portaged). The book scornfully refers to our property posted signs as "bogus 'no trespassing' signs", ignoring the fact that landowners are obligated, by law, to clearly post their property. We are reviewing this matter with our legal team for civil prosecution.

It also labels the entire run as a class V or suitable for extreme kayakers only.

Section 0: "pristine & beautiful creek" Discusses the class V and IV rapids.

Section I calls the Big Bend Falls a class V+ and subsequent rapids as V and IVs.

It also states that, below the rock gorge, the Chattooga turns into a "full fledged river". Coincidentally the WSR study came to the same conclusions as to where the "Chattooga changed". see page 13 of the 1970 WSR proposal. "this section (beginning at Nicholson Fields) is entirely different from the wild cascading sections above it." It adds "It provides an easy section of canoe waters that is suitable for beginners"

The book is actually a nice companion to anyone creeking in North Carolina. It is dissapointing that rules of law and private property rights were not considered in the text on this page.

Best Regards;  
Michael Bamford