From:	bluehill
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Public Comment on Upper Chatooga Use by Boaters
Date:	08/14/2008 03:39 PM

This message expresses my opposition to any change in the current Chattooga river usage by boaters.

The current 1974 plan provides protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act which includes a 1976 total boat ban on the upper Chattooga. People who want to change this to now allow boating rights are entirely self absorbed with their sport to the detriment of those with foresight who know that nature's beauty can not be restored once it is depleted.

The wooly adelgid problem is much bigger than the boaters acknowledge. The beatle destruction of the hemlock trees along the waterways as well as all through the forests along the Eastern U.S. has been going on for more than 10 years. The attempts to save these trees especially along the waterways has been too little too late. Dead trees falling into the river is a matter of "how soon" not a matter of being a small inconvenience to boaters. I am sure they would want the Forest Service to then clear the dead trees out of the streams.

The desire of the boaters should not be allowed to change the planning and management of this area. Very valid projections have been made which are not being given enough attention on the dire effects of destruction of a pristine habitat and killing native flora, driving out wildlife, new access roads, parking, new trails, insufficient whitewater at times and most importantly SAFETY. Many an idiot has been rescued and even bodies recovered from areas due to poor judgment by foolish people who just wanted to have some fun. Finally, suggesting that the Park Service can forecast rapid water for boaters benefits is irresponsible. Having taxpayers support this just for the benefit of boaters is not acceptable. We have much more important items like emergency room care that need changing. This matter should no longer be pursued.

The relative few who want boating in this area are unwilling to admit what can happen to this area if opened up to boating. They have enough rivers to use -- keep the status quo. Protecting this area is our responsibility for future generations.

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