From:	Tony L White
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Fw: Upper Chattooga-Ellicott Rock Wilderness Proposal
Date:	08/14/2008 03:08 PM

Tony L. White
tlwhite01@fs.fed.us
803.561.4072
cell: 803.238.5747
----- Forwarded by Tony L White/R8/USDAFS on 08/14/2008 03:06 PM -----

Richard C Feldhoff <rick.feldhoff@louisville.edu>

08/14/2008 01:14 PM

To <tlwhite01@fs.fed.us>

cc

Subject Upper Chattooga-Ellicott Rock Wilderness Proposal

Dear Tony,

As a member of Trout Unlimited, I have sent in an e-mail note that will be similar to many you and your staff will likely receive. However, my wife and I have significant annual experience in this area and we have several personal thoughts and observations that include the research scientist's perspective.

Personal experiences and comments related to the Upper Chattooga Rvr and Ellicott Rock Wilderness:

My wife and I are research scientists and avid outdoor enthusiasts. We have been coming to the area that includes the Nantahala Nat'l Forest for the past 15 yrs to conduct NSF-supported field research and to enjoy a bit of hiking. Hikes along the Upper Chattooga and in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness have always been particularly memorable. Last week, we hiked to Ellicott and Commissioners Rocks and were once again stimulated and amazed by the solitude and wilderness. We were able to see many small trout in the water and the type of insect life found on the underside of river rocks clearly indicated a pollution-free environment. I cannot see

how significantly increasing human traffic and camping near this river will help sustain this pristine environment. Additionally, we have seen an extreme decrease in summer rainfall the past few yrs such that the upper river system is already stressed by a long drought. As an example, we are currently down more than 12" of avg rainfall for the past 10 weeks in this area (June 1 - Aug 14, 2008) and this is nearly identical to last summer (2007).

Our strong personal preference would be to leave the Upper Chattooga and Ellicott Wilderness areas boat-free year round. This area is a national treasure that should be preserved in its current state for our children and grandchildren. I have read Alt 4 and can reluctantly support it as a possible choice, but I have significant reservations to changing the status quo on this part of the Chattooga Rvr.

Sincerely

Drs Rick & Pamela Feldhoff

Dr. Rick Feldhoff
Professor of Biochemistry
and Molecular Biology
School of Medicine - HSC
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40202

E-mail: rick.feldhoff@louisville.edu
Office Phone 502-852-5752
Cell Phone 502-836-0140
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Rick Feldhoff, Ph.D.
Professor of Biochemistry
and Molecular Biology
School of Medicine
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40202

E-mail: rick.feldhoff@louisville.edu
Phone: (502)852-5752

Cellular: (502)836-0140
FAX: (502)852-6222