From: martha black
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cc: news@crossroadschronicle.com
Subject: Chattooga River Project
Date: 08/15/2008 03:51 PM

These are my comments to the USFS regarding the proposals to change the "zoning of the Chattooga River 57 mile wide Wild and Scenic River, which prohibits boating on any part of the headwaters above Route 28."

My family sold 828 acres of land to the USFS in 1991. It was the #1 property on the USFS acquisition list at that time. It was really a bargain sale. Several other land owners followed suit, protecting almmost 2000 acres of the Chattooga Watershed. It was done with the understanding that the purpose of the USFS in acquiring this land was to protect this Wild and Scenic River. That is your mandate. To allow any change in the use of the river would be a slap-in-the face to those of us who have done out part to protect the river.

The rafters and canoers have plenty of water downstream already and this area would be very adversely affected by a change of policy. It should be kept as low impact and pristine as possible . If you let boaters have a foot in the door, hikers, swimmers, birdwatchers etc will be run down by water vehicle traffic and outfitters hauling equipment, food and people down gouged out paths to the river and litter and erosion will become big problems for those that have to clean up and repair. The Forest Service does not have the money or manpower any more to repair damage and patrol the area.

A good example of this is Silver Slip Falls on Cashiers Creek, a major tributary of the Chattooga that you own. A nearby property owner dammed up the Creek a number of years ago using rock over big black pipe, left bags of quickcrete which are still there and built a fence. All of that is now is disrepair so that the black pipes are exposed, the fence is partially standing and the concrete bags are still there. He cuts the hillside between the twin falls and along with development above, has caused silt islands to form in the former pool at the bottom of the falls, which you own. I went down there last Sunday and picked up litter, plastic bottles, flip flops etc. It used to be a big falls in pristine condition and today it is a sad place of human abuse with more to follow with high density development proposed at the Millstone Inn and on Cashiers Lake, both of which are on this creek. The bottom of the creek that used to be a pool with a gravel
bed, is now mud and algae. Is this what you want for the upper Chattooga? Erosion will cover the gravel where trout bed, so many people will cause litter which will wash into the river. Where will it stop? It is up to y ou to stop it by denying the boaters access to any more of the river.

Thank you,

Martha Crouch Black