From: Mick Knox
Reply To: blisteredfromfishin@yahoo.com
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: Chattooga River Project Comments
Date: 08/18/2008 11:06 AM

Dear Sumpter National Forest,

I have a stake in both sides of this issue. I am a Fly fisherman and a Boater. I have paddled many rivers encountering fisherman. I have also fished many rivers encountering many boaters. I have had very few negative encounters either way. I feel the problem will take care of it's self if boating is allowed on the Entire Chattooga system including tributaries.
Once the fishermen see that "their" river is not overrun with boaters all of the time, the controversy will die back.

The fishermen will have to get used to the Idea that boaters may have less impact than they do on the rivers. Boaters cruise through at a good pace moving with the currents not trampling sensitive shore line vegetation or leaving trash for some one else to pick up.

I also believe the number of boaters will be self limiting. The rapids are such that only a small percentage of boaters will want to attempt a run. This system also does not have reliable flows or easy access.

I say if the Fishermen want a private club to fish at, there are memberships available to them. This Chattooga river is a PUBLIC river and should be managed consistently with the rest of the Wild and Scenic rivers in Wilderness Areas in the U.S. Paddling IS specifically allowed in both areas. The boating ban has NO basis.

Paddling should be allowed in a similar manner to your alternative number 8, except on the *entire* Upper Chattooga River and its tributaries.

Thank you for reading my comments.

Regards,

Mick Knox
Fly Fisherman and Boater