From: Penny Kephart
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: Chattooga River Project
Date: 07/14/2008 10:00 AM

U.S. Forest Service
Chattooga River Project
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212.

July 14, 2008

RE: Chattooga River Project

Dear Sumter National Forest,

I am an avid kayaker, hiker, and mountain biker. I travel to enjoy outdoor recreation all over the country including, South Carolina.

After reviewing the Environmental Assessment regarding the recreational management of the Chattooga River, I've concluded your proposal would not meet my interests and is a disregard for certain types of recreational users, namely boaters.

Here are my concerns:

* The public should have the right to float on public Wild and Scenic Rivers.

* All aspects of the ³Outstanding Remarkable Values² of Wild and Scenic Rivers should be protected on the entire river, not just in some areas.

* The EA is not a user capacity analysis and does not reference one.

* No alternative is acceptable because they all include boating bans without justification.

* The EA and preferred alternative is not protective of the river because it considers boating to be the only management variable, while other larger user groups who have more impact are not seriously considered for limits.

* The USFS preferred alternative includes a total ban on 2/3 of the upper river, a ban on tributary boating, and allows only 0-6 days of limited boating on the remaining reach - while allowing all other existing uses in unlimited numbers.. This is not equitable and not acceptable!

* The EA offers no basis for the boating bans and limits

* The EA lacks a full range of alternatives

* The USFS hired qualified consultants and did not use their input

* The 450 CFS average daily flow trigger in the preferred alternative is a flawed measure that should be eliminated from consideration. There is no way a paddler can know this number and will be an administrative burden for the agency.

Thank you for considering these comments. Please consider conducting a real user capacity analysis and immediately allowing boating in the same numbers, places, and seasons that you allow existing users. 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 considering these comments,

Sincerely

Penny Kephart

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