From:	French, Brian
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Chattooga River environmental assessment
Date:	07/16/2008 03:30 PM

Hello,

My name is Brian French and I live in Missoula, MT. I am writing in regards to the environmental assessment that is currently underway for the Chattooga River region. Although I do not regularly visit the southeast region of our great country, the Chattooga River is one draw that entices me and countless other paddlers in the western U.S. to visit the Southeast. Banning access to boaters on the Chattooga River is not only irrational from a recreational/multi-use standpoint; it just doesn't make good economic sense. In this "crunch time" of our national economy, I would think decision making affecting public policy would favor economic stimuli of any sort and encourage out of state visitors to come to your area for whatever reason, including paddling.

The Chattooga River is a national gem that you have the ability to sensibly preserve and make available to whitewater enthusiasts as well as other recreationists. It makes sense from an equitable standpoint as well as from an economic point of view. I am planning to contact Montana's political representation in Washington on this matter and I hope you will consider reversing your proposal to ban access to boaters on the Chattooga and its tributaries as stated in "Alternative 4" – if nothing else, because it is simply the right thing to do.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter,

Brian French