From:	hkacpa@yahoo.com
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc:	burch@gon.com
Subject:	Save the Upper Chattooga River Comments
Date:	08/18/2008 05:43 PM

The following comments about saving the Upper Chattooga River were submitted via the Georgia Outdoor Network website at www.georgiaoutdoornetwork.org

Name: H. Kyle Anderson
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Address: 6514 Dobbins Bridge Road,
City: Anderson
State: South Carolina
Postal Code: 29626-5709

Comments:
Dear Sumter National Forest,

I am Kyle Anderson from Anderson SC and have been visiting and using the Chattooga River area since 1976.

I have been extremely disappointed to see the vast overuse, lack of workable management plan and the degradation of the environment for many years now. Most recently when my family hiked in from Burrell's Ford to explore a possible backpacking trip for the Boy Scouts, the amount of trash including beer cans, bottles, toilet paper, fire pits and other debris and condition of the trails and camping area's were terrible. We lost the trail several times due to the numerous fishing and camping side trails. The few sign-in points for non-boating users were in such bad shape it was clear they had not been usable for years. Most disturbing, I was cautioned by several locals that camping at the river near road access could result in my family being subjected to loud drunken parties and even gunfire.

The Forest Service has completely failed to complete studies on all user groups. Boating is viewed as the only variable in all management plan alternatives. When in fact, there are larger, more environmentally damaging user groups that are not considered for limits and/or restrictions. It's only with quality impact studies that the Forest Service may equitably reduce the impact of all user groups and therefore, protect and restore its natural wonders.

First and foremost, the Forest Service must:

- Permanently close user created trails. A few well "designed" and well used trails could be converted to sanctioned Forest Service trails.
- Establish a fair and equitable permitting system for all Upper Chattooga users. The data collected will help establish future use and limits guidelines.
- Restrict and rotate river access to anglers, allowing the stream beds and banks to recuperate from trampling.
- Restrict and rotate campsite use, allowing areas to recuperate from over use.
- Ban camping within 1/2 mile of all bridges or roads.
- Allow all user groups, including boaters, access to the entire upper Chattooga area. There is no legal basis for excluding a group of users based on your current study or results of your management plan for the last 30 years.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely

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