From: kvistads@yahoo.com
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
cc: burch@gon.com
Subject: Save the Upper Chattooga River Comments
Date: 08/16/2008 07:57 AM

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

Name: Russell Kvistad
E-Mail Address: kvistads@yahoo.com
Address: 2432 Madison Drive,
City: Tifton
State: Georgia
Postal Code: 31793

Comments:
Dear U.S. Forest Service:

I am writing this to express my most sincere opposition to the opening of water ways in the upper Chattooga River for white water rafting and other non-essential boating activities. As being an avid trout fisherman for the better part of my life (50 years old), and a conservationist for the preservation of the wild, I believe this would have devastating effects on the current fishery and its wildlife counterpart.

I would also like to convey to you my ancestry in the Rabun County area. My family goes all the way back to the first White settlements in the area as well as Native Amercan Indian bloodlines. I'm kin to the Indian War fighter - General Edward Coffee. My Great Grandmother was a Watts and their ties to the Native Indian population is well documented in the books; "Sketches of Rabun County History" and "Rabun County and Its People". Even though I have always lived in the extreme opposite end of Georgia (South GA - Tifton), I make regular visits to the area and utilize its vast wilderness areas in the way of camping, fishing, hunting and other outdoor activities. In the best interest of passing on a long lived tradition to my only son Raynor S. Kvistad (7 years old), it is pertinent that this as well as all wilderness areas be kept from groups who don't give a rip about its wildlife preservation.

Please for the sake of future generations to come, don't give in to these special interest groups who are basically tourist and have no intention of the long-term preservation of the wild. I have seen these groups and how they destroy it for others. Just look at what Ichetucknee Springs, FL and see the mess and influx of commercialization of the local area. The rafting community already has plenty of access on the Chattooga now and they need NO more. I'm in favor of keeping the current regulations in tact and not yielding to opening additional waters for rafting. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Russell H. Kvistad