From: William Pennington Jr
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: I Support Alternative 8.
Date: 08/18/2008 02:27 PM

Respectfully submitted to the U.S. Forest Service:
As a long standing (make that kneeling) member of the paddling community I have been understandably upset upon reading the recent news of the Forest Service's decision to essentially maintain the status quo (a.k.a. Alternative 4) with regard to paddling on the Chattooga above the 28 bridge. In fact, after biting a large hole in the center of the page and trying desperately to find the neck of the paper so that I could choke the life out of it, my sweet wife quietly suggested that I double up on my meds for the day. After checking my pulse and finding it to be one continuous surge, I decided she probably was right. But then, as the drugs kicked in, it suddenly occurred to me that the problem was not only the "Magoo-ish" myopia of the those mavens of management known as the Forest Service, but that much of the blame lay also with the paddling community. We simply have not provided accurate data on how little overlap there will be between anglers and boaters. Despite the seemingly reasonable argument that no sane person would want to fish under the conditions necessary for adequate paddling (i.e. river at three feet and rising during a cold pouring rain or more likely sleet), we have not provided quantitative information to support this claim.
Therefore, I propose a bold new program to track the habits and movements of the typical Chattooga trout fisherman (or would that be habitual movements – they are, after all, regular guys). The cornerstone of this study will be a "tag and release" program. The subjects of this study, when spotted out in the wild, will be passivated with a mild sedative (a blend of Mad Dog 20/20 and Schlitz beer, also known as a Sneaky Pete). An unassuming plastic tag designed to complement both camouflage and the color, red, will be stapled to their ear. The sexual orientation of the subject will need to be established in order to determine whether to attach the tag to the right or left lobe (if anyone has information on how to determine this, I'm "all ears", although I suppose this option should be reserved for the bisexuals). The date, time and location of the victim, I mean subject, will be logged in. The number of Red, White & Blue tallboys, vienna sausages, and Skoal cans will be used as metrics of the subject's cultural impact. After all data has been entered, the subject will be observed from a safe distance as they slowly awaken and go about their business. Once a representative sampling of the subjects have been tagged, a simple pair of binoculars will be sufficient to monitor their movements and study their habits.
As with any successful scientific study we'll need a sophisticated name to lend credibility and an air of professionalism to the project. I propose "TAG the TŪG" (for Track And Graph the Trout Unlimited Guys), although I suppose "TAG the TUGE" would be better, as it does not presuppose the Forest Service personnel's grasp of grammatical symbols and has the added advantage of reaching out to our paddling brethren up north (Tag the Tūg – Eh!). I am confident that once the data is gathered and correlated against the conditions suitable for paddling, the Forest Service will have no recourse but to welcome boaters into the fold with open arms.

Thank You!

Bill Pennington