From:	Wright Clay
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Chattooga Headwaters - it's not a government-sponsored fishing preserve
Date:	08/01/2008 08:37 AM

It's just a river.

Dear Sumter National Forest,

I am a paddler and fisherman who grew up in Macon Georgia and have travelled to the Chattooga many many times. I have also kayaked over 300 rivers all over the country and have never seen such a biased ban on one sport but not the other. I have reviewed your EA assessment and found your 'science' to be totally unscientific and indeed illogical. This is a discredit to both the Forest Service and the practice of allowing the Forest Service to do it's own Environmental Assessments.

Please review your position and submit one that has some basis on science, practicality, and logic.

What is the basis - on the environment - for a boating ban or limit? Seems a basic part of any legislation, no?

Where is the information from all the scientists and experts hired to asses the impact - you spent the tax money then ignore the results?

What is the basis for predicting conflicts of user groups? In 33 years of paddling and fishing I have encountered only two situations where one group was disturbed - a kayaker hit by a lure and a fisherman who was simply angry that we were there. Both these scenarios involved heavy alcohol use by the fisherman (judging by the stack of cans) and both ended quickly as we paddled away. Where is the scientific justification for these encounters?

I prefer Alternative 8, as well as allowing the right to float Wild and Scenic Rivers regardless of private land along the river.

Thanks for your comment period and for reviewing these comments. Please restore my faith in the Forest Service and present a logical, reasonable, science based report so we can open the entire Chattooga to boating like every other stream. There will be no drawbacks. Despite the fishermen's grumblings, after an initial rush this will be a rarely used but highly enjoyed occasional destination for paddlers.

Sincerely,

Clay Wright
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