From: Michelle Burnett
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@FSNOTES
Subject: Fw: upper Chattooga management plan
Date: 07/31/2008 09:27 AM

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Michelle Burnett
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National Forests (South Carolina)
4931 Broad River Road
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----- Forwarded by Michelle Burnett/R8/USDAFS on 07/31/2008 09:26 AM -----

Jeanne LeBoeuf/R8/USDAFS

07/28/2008 09:08 AM

To Michelle Burnett/R8/USDAFS@FSNOTES
cc
Subject Fw: upper Chattooga management plan

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Jeanne S. LeBoeuf
Staff Assistant to Forest Supervisor
Francis Marion & Sumter NFs in SC
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----- Forwarded by Jeanne LeBoeuf/R8/USDAFS on 07/28/2008 09:07 AM -----

Rosanne Rowe / WO / USDAFS

07/28/2008 07:35 AM

To Jerome Thomas/R8/USDAFS@FSNOTES, Jeanne LeBoeuf/R8/USDAFS@FSNOTES

cc Chris N Brown/WO/USDAFS@FSNOTES

Subject Fw: upper Chattooga management plan

Rosanne Rowe
Executive Assistant to the Chief
WO, Office of the Chief, Yates 4NW
Office: 202-205-8439
Cell: 202-384-7412
Fax: 202-358-4063
Email: rosannerowe@fs.fed.us

----- Forwarded by Rosanne Rowe/WO/USDAFS on 07/28/2008 07:35 AM -----

g2debacher@bellsouth.net

07/27/2008 12:26 PM

To comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us

cc akimbell@fs.fed.us

Subject upper Chattooga management plan

I am writing concerning the so-called "alternative 4" for management of the upper Chattooga. I am very familiar with this section. Disgusted that I was not allowed to see it in the most natural and least damaging way, by paddling, I instead have explored it by rock-hopping and wading. I have 750 photos illustrating every bit of the public miles of the upper Chattooga. Based on that, I pose the

following questions.

Which section of the upper Chattooga is the most suitable for paddling by the widest segment of the public?

Which section of the upper Chattooga has the most days per year of sufficient water for paddling?

Which section of the upper Chattooga has the USFS proposed to leave completely closed to paddling?

The answer to all three is the section from Burrells Ford to Highway 28.

The USFS is proposing to continue to keep the section most suitable for paddling closed, apparently only to assuage the feelings of those user groups who have enjoyed privileged access to that section since the 70s.

Meanwhile, paddling, fishing, and hiking have co-existed on Overflow Creek and the West Fork for many years without significant problems. The paddlers are on Overflow when the water is high, and the fishermen and hiker/waders are there when Overflow is low.

The experience on Overflow, and for that matter on the Chauga, the Chattahoochee above Helen, the Jacks and the Conasauga, all show that water levels lead to self-management of use without significant conflict by paddlers, fishermen, and others.

I do not see how the USFS proposed plan can be considered a serious response to the past banning of paddling as long as paddlers are excluded from the section most suitable for them. One of the goals for the USFS should be to increase paddler access, but the proposed plan reeks of tokenism and politics, not a serious attempt to redress a severe imbalance in use.

With regard to the proposed management plan for the uppermost sections, "Chattooga Cliffs," and from Bullpen Bridge to Burrells

Ford, the proposed plan is cumbersome and unworkable with regard to permitting and water levels. In general, I find limiting paddling based on water levels to be acceptable, but it should be left to paddlers to read the conditions at the river. If they choose to paddle below allowed levels, they should be ticketed. If the allowed levels are specified intelligently, I do not think there will be a problem.

I also do not agree to limiting paddler use to only the winter months. In my 35 years of SE paddling, there have been a number of years where good water levels would have allowed paddling the upper Chattooga at certain times. At those times, fishermen and hikers would in most cases have left the river because of high water and heavy rain. No conflict.

Very truly yours

Gary DeBacher

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Jeanne LeBoeuf/R8/USDAFS

To Michelle Burnett/R8/USDAFS@FSNOTES

07/28/2008 09:09 AM

cc

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----- Forwarded by Jeanne LeBoeuf/R8/USDAFS on 07/28/2008 09:09 AM -----

Rosanne Rowe/WO/USDAFS

07/25/2008 09:24 AM

To Jerome Thomas/R8/USDAFS@FSNOTES, Jeanne LeBoeuf/R8/USDAFS@FSNOTES

cc Chris N Brown/WO/USDAFS@FSNOTES

Subject Fw: The Chattooga has enough boating

Rosanne Rowe
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----- Forwarded by Rosanne Rowe/WO/USDAFS on 07/25/2008 09:23 AM -----

"Michael Bamford" <mbamford123@comcast.net>

07/22/2008 04:58 PM

To <akimbell@fs.fed.us>

cc

Subject The Chattooga has enough boating

Dear Gail Kimbell,

Management of the Chattooga river offers a diversity of resource settings for a broad range of visitors. The recent draft EA published by the Sumter Forest Service proposes to continue to offer a variety of

recreational setting while accommodating kayakers during higher flows which are most common in the winter.

American Whitewater (AW) has argued that boaters would only be able to boat during cold weather after large events, therefore conflict with other users would be moot. This rhetoric can be found within their 2004 appeal and in numerous Western North Carolina newspaper articles printed over the past few years. Seasonal and flow-level restrictions was initial proposed by AW to the USFS back in the fall of 1997, as a compromise for access. The USFS has simply selected a preferred alternative that matches what AW "said" they wanted and preserves most O.R.Value concerns. Brilliant!

Over the past four years I have watched the USFS conduct the LAC study (as recommended by AW in 2002) conduct a recreational flow study (as recommended by AW in the appeal) using a consultant, recommended by AW. Now AW is screaming that the assessment is unfair, because the outcome does not give them everything they now demand.

Like a spoiled child AW remains fixated on what they do not have and continues to demand it.

For thirty years kayakers have enjoyed over 60% of the designated Chattooga WSR and 75% of the Chattooga Watershed without boater limitations. Now the USFS proposes an additional seven miles of river could be open with restrictions and American Whitewater remains fixated on the limitations, not on the proposed compromise that protects other visitor experiences and offers more boating.

AW's egocentric arguments request that the USFS ignore all other visitors, the wildlife and the fact that they already enjoy the majority of the watershed for whitewater. AW demands a complete focus on kayaker needs and has refused to even consider the desires of any other user-group that also uses the Chattooga River. In fact AW argues that the USFS should reduce fishing, horseback riding and hiking to accommodate more boating. What might be next?; possibly a request to remove the "pesky" wildlife found along the Chattooga.

AW has stirred up a frenzy within the boating community in order to continue fighting until they get what they now demand (and it also makes for good fundraising). The USFS now needs to consider how to deal with

the spoiled child. Instead of turning to the conflict resolution manual , I suggest Dr. Spock or another Child psychologist like T Berry Brazelton could offer more helpful advice on dealing with AW.

Good luck and thank you for your time.

Michael Bamford
Cashiers, NC
Member Friends Of The Upper Chattooga; Advocates For Wilderness

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Subject Fw: Chattooga River management plan comments

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----- Forwarded by Rosanne Rowe/WO/USDAFS on 07/25/2008 09:27 AM -----

"Mark Stover" <mtnsport70@verizon.net>

07/22/2008 09:45 AM

To <comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us>, <akimbell@fs.fed.us>

cc

Subject Chattooga River management plan comments

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Mark Stover and I am a biology teacher from Weaverville, NC. I also am an avid whitewater paddler and I am writing with grave concerns about the recently published Environmental Assessment on recreation on the Chattooga. The current alternative offered is simply unacceptable for several reasons.

1. It is little more than a crumb offering, the reality of boating given the provisions in the EA still effectively maintain a boating ban.
2. Given the absurdly low number of boaters allowed and the 450cfs average daily flow trigger, boaters such as myself that travel long distances to boat in the Chattooga watershed are further hindered in using this public resource.
3. The EA prohibits boating to 6 possible days a year while not limiting in any way any other user group. WHY? This seems inequitable and unacceptable to single out one user group for exclusion from a public forest and Wild and Scenic waterway.
4. Floating on waterways that are National Wild and Scenic Rivers should not be prohibited regardless of who the landowners are along the river.
5. Paddlers prefer an alternative similar to Alternative 8 that: 1) allows full access to boating on the entire Chattooga River below Grimshawes Bridge, 2) allows paddling on tributaries, 3) includes encounter standards based on a real user capacity analysis, 4) will *equitably* limit *total* use only when encounter standards are consistently exceeded, and 5) will do so using all available indirect measures first.
6. Where's the user capacity analysis?

At a time when expenses are at an all time high in the government, it sickens me to think of the tax payers dollars (my dollars, your dollars, every working person's dollars) that are being wasted here to help maintain a ban that is illegal and immoral. Our Founding Fathers would be shocked at the way the federal government is behaving in this situation; alas, we no longer live in the free nation our Founding Fathers worked to create, but I digress.

There are many levels to argue against this ridiculous ban, but at its base we have this: the river levels required for boating in the upper reaches of the Chattooga watershed are going to be such that it certainly will not be safe or good conditions for swimming, wading, or fishing. By its very nature, the river will create the situation that will limit or prevent any significant user group conflicts that you may be concerned about. I can say in nearly a decade of whitewater paddling, I have never had a negative encounter with an angler on the river. It sickens me to think of the time wasted here arguing about this, when AW and TU should be teaming together like on other rivers in other parts of the country to help protect river resources. Given the condition of Stekoa, God only knows we need to be doing that here too, but that fight is for another day. Thank you for considering these comments.

Mark Stover
191 Double Brook Dr
Weaverville, NC 28787----- Forwarded by Michelle Burnett/R8/USDAFS on 07/31/2008 09:26 AM -----

Jeanne LeBoeuf/R8/USDAFS

07/28/2008 09:10 AM

To Michelle Burnett/R8/USDAFS@FSNOTES

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Subject Fw: Chattooga River management plan comments

Michelle--sorry if some of these are some Jerome already sent to you.

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