From:	Paul Pitman
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Boating plan on upper Chattooga
Date:	07/31/2008 09:06 AM

To whom it may concern,

I would like to voice my opposition to boating on the upper sections of the Chattooga river. I am a year round fly fisherman and this section is a rare treasure to me and other fishermen, even in the winter and despite those individuals who boat on the upper sections illegally now. I have heard all the arguments for and against boating on this section of the river, but for me it comes down to this: I don't interfere with their boating on the lower sections, I just reel up and wait for them to pass. But their passing typically puts the fish down for quite a while with the bumping, scraping, splashing and yelling; the bass on the lower sections are far less sensitive to this than the trout on the upper sections. It is also quite common to be fishing a run on the river and have a group of kayaks pass directly through the area I am fishing, sometimes passing within feet of me. I am sure the whitewater organizations will deny this utterly or say these are isolated examples but for me and others like me these are everyday occurrences on the river when we fish the lower sections. It is frustrating to take two hours to hike in to a stretch of river only to have a swarm of boaters come through and ruin the fishing for hours. Additionally, the upper sections of the river are fairly narrow, especially in this time of drought, and provide limited lines for kayakers to pass through which are in many cases also the prime fishing areas. And just because the flow is over 450cfs at US76 doesn't mean the upper sections are unfishable. Localized storms can produce high flows in a lower section and leave the upper sections at normal levels. In closing, they have free access to the lower sections of the river as well as many other bodies of water, please leave this one area boat free for fishermen to enjoy.

Best regards,
Paul Pitman

PCC Chemax
30 Old Augusta Road
Piedmont, SC 29673
USA
www.pcc-chemax.com

Paul E. Pitman
Technical Manager-Polymer Additives
Tel.: 864-422-6644
Mob.: 864-313-3303
Fax: 864-277-7807
E-Mail: ppitman@pcc-chemax.com