From: Timothy Smith
Reply To: thetrowelsort@yahoo.com
To: comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject: Chattooga River Project Comments
Date: 08/07/2008 08:21 PM

U.S. Forest Service

Chattooga River Project

4931 Broad River Road

Columbia, SC 29212.

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

August 8, 2008

RE: Chattooga River Project Comments

Dear Sumter National Forest,

My name is Timothy Smith. I recently moved from Knoxville, Tennessee, and I now live in Spokane, Washington, where I am a Federal employee. I also happen to be an avid whitewater kayaker and frequent visitor to public lands. I am writing with regards to the possible ban on non-motorized use of the Chattooga River.

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment regarding the recreational management of the Chattooga River. I disagree with your analysis and your proposal. Both treat me and my community of river enthusiasts unfairly and your proposal would not meet my interests. Please consider the following concerns I have regarding this issue:

- The USFS has spent thirteen years searching for a reason to limit paddling on the Chattooga and has found *none*. It is time to open

the river to boating.

- The EA and preferred alternative are not equitable or protective of the river because they consider boating to be the only management variable, while other larger more impactful uses are not seriously considered for limits.
- The USFS preferred alternative includes a total ban on 2/3 of the upper river, a ban on tributary boating, and allows only 0-6 days of limited boating on the remaining reach – while allowing all other wilderness conforming existing uses in unlimited numbers.. This is not equitable and not acceptable!
- The EA is no better or different than the last one, is at least a year late and has wasted millions in tax payer money
- The 450 CFS average daily flow trigger in the preferred alternative is a flawed measure that should be eliminated from any considerations. There is no way a paddler can know this number and will be an administrative burden for the agency.
- The public should have the right to float on public Wild and Scenic Rivers regardless of who owns the land along the river. Noone owns our waterways, not TVA, not the US Army CoE, and certainly not the Department of the Interior.
- All aspects of the "Outstanding Remarkable Values" of Wild and Scenic Rivers should be protected on the entire river, not just in some areas.

Thank you for considering these comments. Please consider conducting a real user capacity analysis and immediately allowing boating in the same numbers, places, and seasons that you allow existing users. Paddling should be allowed in a similar manner to your alternative number 8, except on the *entire* Upper Chattooga River and its tributaries.

Thank you for considering these comments,

Sincerely,

Timothy Smith

803 East Sierra Ave

Spokane, WA 99208