From:	Dale Powell
To:	comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us
Subject:	Comments on Chattooga River User Capacity Analysis
Date:	08/06/2008 02:10 PM

To Whom it may concern,

I would first of all like to thank the Forest Service for this opportunity to comment on the Draft EA and preferred alternative. I would also like to thank the Forest Service for involving all affected and interested parties in the analysis process through their public meetings, hearings, workshops and comment periods. I would also like to thank the Forest Service for designing the preferred alternative (#4) with zoning stipulations to minimize conflict between anglers and boaters, avoiding the overuse and user conflicts that have plagued the lower Chattooga for decades.

I would rather the preferred alternative had been Alternative #3 (boat-free year-round, high-quality trout fishing), but I can accept Alternative #4. It preserves a "foot travel only" backcountry zone between Burrell's Ford and the Highway 28 Bridge. It is designed to minimize conflict between visitors to the upper Chattooga.

More important, alternative #4 preserves the ability to zone public recreational waters for all federal agencies (USFS, NPS, and BLM) by section of stream, by time of year, by water level (flow), and by number of boats/day. To maintain the quality of experience for all visitors and/or protect riparian resources, zoning of public recreational waters is absolutely necessary now and in the future, particularly as recreational demands on limited public waters increase near population centers and in the Rocky Mountain Region.

The Forest Service preferred alternative also calls for limiting overnight camping in the corridor of the upper Chattooga to designated sites and closing and/or rehabilitating a number of user-created campsites and trails. To relieve congestion and reduce impacts, roadside parking will also be prohibited within ¼ mile of Burrell's Ford Bridge. In addition to 'Put and Take' trout fishing, Burrell's Ford is the most popular trailhead for the Ellicott Rock Wilderness. It is the trailhead for Kings Creek Falls, the trailhead for Spoonauger Falls, the trailhead for the backcountry trails down the river, plus the Burrell's Ford walk-in campground. As a result, the Burrell's Ford Bridge area is the most congested and overused/abused section of the upper Chattooga. Limiting camping and parking are needed to protect the

area for future generations.

I believe that the Forest Service‘s preferred alternative is a compromise that is fair to all stakeholders. It is obvious that not all recreation activities are compatible. **Zoning ensures that different and conflicting types of users are physically separated** Zoning is a time tested, fair, and legal land and water management practice. Zoning of conflicting activities is good stewardship. I believe the zoning stipulations in Alternative #4 will provide good protection for the upper Chattooga backcountry’s Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV) of solitude and remoteness for present and future generations.

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