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PUBLIC HEARING FOR U.S. FOREST SERVICE

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The Public Hearing for the U.S. Forest Service was taken before Keri J. Lumm, Court Reporter and Notary Public, at 301 West Main Street, St. John's Lutheran Church, Walhalla, South Carolina, on the 10th day of July, 2007, commencing at the hour of 1:00 o'clock, p.m.

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1 APPEARANCES:

2 Jerome Thomas, Forest Supervisor

3 Marisue Hilliard, National Forest of North  
4 Carolina

5 Dave Jensen and Mike Crane, Forest Rangers

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8 (In the following transcript, a dash [---]  
9 is used to indicate an unintentional or  
10 purposeful interruption in a sentence, or to  
11 indicate halting speech or an unfinished  
12 sentence in dialogue.)

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14

1           TERRY SEYDEN:

2           My name is Terry Seyden. For those of  
3           you who don't know me I'm the public  
4           affairs officer for the National Forest  
5           in North Carolina, and I've been working  
6           with the Chattooga project for three or  
7           four years now it seems like. But today  
8           is a public hearing. A number of you  
9           have asked for such an opportunity  
10          earlier in the process, and we designed  
11          today as just one of many opportunities  
12          for the public to work with us as we  
13          move towards a decision on recreation  
14          uses on the upper Chattooga River. We  
15          have a public hearing today. This  
16          Saturday there's a workshop. People can  
17          roll up their sleeves and work with us  
18          in more depth on specific components of  
19          alternatives. I wanted to mention that  
20          the meeting place for that Saturday  
21          workshop has been changed to the First  
22          Baptist Church just down the road. It  
23          starts at 9:00 and runs to 4:00, and we  
24          are having a working lunch, so to speak,  
25          so there's details out front for that

1 workshop coming up. Today's ground  
2 rules, just ask that we just respect one  
3 another, and listen carefully, and don't  
4 interrupt. Remember we are in church so  
5 just be respectful to each other, and,  
6 you know, try not to interrupt or slow  
7 the process down. We designed the  
8 ground rules so each person would have  
9 up to three minutes. Some of you may  
10 think that's too tight, but the reason  
11 we came up with that is that will allow  
12 approximately 80 to 90 people can make  
13 their statements and four boaters  
14 (inaudible) that we have. And to help  
15 you we have a couple of aides that have  
16 a timer, kitchen timer, here that we can  
17 set to ding when the three minutes is  
18 up. We also have on the screen here,  
19 not a too high tech thing, but the  
20 speaker can look over to the right and  
21 see how much time they have left. For  
22 those of you who aren't able to make the  
23 three minute limit, I'll be gently  
24 reminding you that the time is up, and  
25 encourage you to hand in your written

1 statements so we can move on. We do  
2 have a court reporter today who is going  
3 to be taking a verbatim transcript of  
4 everybody's comments, and that will be  
5 available within a couple of weeks for  
6 people to share. We have the decision  
7 makers here, Jerome Thomas, the Forest  
8 Supervisor for the Sumter/Princeton area  
9 National Forest. Marisue Hilliard, my  
10 boss, up in the National Forest of North  
11 Carolina. We have at least two Rangers  
12 here, Dave Jensen, from the  
13 Chattahoochee (inaudible) and Mike  
14 Crane, in the local area here, near  
15 Pickens. And do we have any other  
16 Rangers? All right. So what we're going  
17 to do is we're going to ask the people  
18 to go in order, and we want to ask you  
19 to maybe --- we have some chairs up  
20 here, so keep track of the number of the  
21 speaker, and if your number is getting  
22 close, just line up so when we ask the  
23 people with numbers one through five to  
24 come on up and just sort of be at the  
25 staging area. And if as we get into it

1           you see the chairs are getting thinned  
2           out, and you know you're the next  
3           numbers, please, just to make this thing  
4           run smooth, invite yourself up, and I'll  
5           remind you, as you need to speak. Okay.  
6           And I would also ask that each speaker  
7           for the benefit of the court reporter as  
8           you first start your remarks, simply,  
9           you know, tell your name, and what group  
10          your affiliated with, if any. And also  
11          the speakers can just hand in their  
12          cards to me as they're --- as they're  
13          done --- or as they start. Okay.  
14          Speaker number one.

15         BRIAN JACOBSON:

16           Hello. My name is Brian Jacobson. I am  
17           a private paddler affiliated with  
18           American White Water. The issue that I  
19           really wanted to highlight on was  
20           talking about the top stretch of what's  
21           called Section 00, or the Chattooga  
22           Cliff Section. This is from the Jackson  
23           County GIS map, and if you look within a  
24           mile of the river there's 295 pieces of  
25           private property, and if you look within

1 a quarter mile of the river there's 43  
2 pieces of property. Currently this  
3 section is the first mile, 1.7 miles, is  
4 on private land, even though it does  
5 contain the wild and scenic corridor,  
6 but there is no protection. There is no  
7 management by the Forest Service to  
8 protect the outstanding remarkable  
9 values of this section of the river. My  
10 biggest concern is that all these 295  
11 properties are developed that just the  
12 sediment and septic tanks from those  
13 properties will have a major impact on  
14 the river that will be beyond what ---  
15 anything that the fishermen and the  
16 boaters could do. There's a river  
17 that's very similar in Georgia called  
18 Cartecay, and when I first started  
19 boating 30 years ago it was a wilderness  
20 dream basically, and now you can see  
21 virtually every single rapid has a house  
22 perched over it, and the decks spill out  
23 onto the rocks in the river and such.  
24 And my fear is that the Chattooga could  
25 end up like that some day, and if we

1           lose this part of the headwaters, we've  
2           really lost the whole thing. I guess  
3           the key is, you know, with --- with that  
4           property and without any kind of  
5           agreement on how to protect it, it's  
6           really just one estate sale away from  
7           somebody taking the --- taking that  
8           section of the river and wholly  
9           developing it, you know, like happened  
10          on the Cartecay.

11         TERRY SEYDEN:

12                 Thank you very much.

13         MARK SINGLETON:

14                 Well, thank you. I'm pleased to be here  
15                 today. For those of you that don't know  
16                 me my name is Mark Singleton. I'm the  
17                 executive director of American White  
18                 Water, and we are located in Cooleemee,  
19                 North Carolina. AW has been working on  
20                 this issue for over ten years, and as  
21                 all of you know that the Chattooga was  
22                 designed wild and scenic back in 1974.  
23                 Two years later it was a unilateral  
24                 decision by the Forest Service at that  
25                 time to band boating on the upper

1 regions of the river. AW has been  
2 working to reverse this --- this ban on  
3 white water boating, which we believe  
4 violates both the Wild and Scenic River  
5 Act and the Wilderness Act. AW's  
6 efforts gained traction back in 2004  
7 with a successful appeal of the Forest  
8 and Management Plan at that time. Last  
9 month the Forest Service released the  
10 integrated report, which is the first  
11 significant scientific study of the  
12 upper Chattooga, and in that integrated  
13 report are the negative impacts of past  
14 and current users. For those of you  
15 that haven't read the integrated report,  
16 it documents trash way beyond what is  
17 consistent with other wild and scenic  
18 river corridors. It documents large  
19 footprint campsites, fire rings to the  
20 water's edge. And it documents miles of  
21 current user created trails off the  
22 current trail system. It seems that the  
23 only management resource has been band  
24 boating. For AW what started as a local  
25 access issue on the upper Chattooga

1 River over ten years ago, it's now a  
2 national issue that could shape the  
3 future of wild and scenic rivers and  
4 wilderness areas across the United  
5 States. Usually AW has a very close  
6 partnership with the management  
7 agencies, in this case the Forest  
8 Service. We also work very closely with  
9 Trout Unlimited. Together AW and TU are  
10 founding members of the Hydropower  
11 Reform Coalition. That's a group that's  
12 been very productive on the national  
13 front and has restored countless miles  
14 of river and fish habitat. Yet on the  
15 Chattooga things are different. I'm  
16 often asked boaters and anglers get  
17 along everywhere else. What makes the  
18 Chattooga so different? And candidly, I  
19 don't have a good answer. All I can say  
20 is there's a 30 year status quo that's  
21 in place. It's time to move forward.  
22 We've got to put that behind us. If one  
23 discipline of wilderness complying user,  
24 in this case paddlers, can be excluded  
25 from use while the river corridor is

1 unmanaged and impacted by current and  
2 past users through uncontrolled use  
3 flies in the face of the responsible  
4 river and forest management. The  
5 biophysical impacts that are outlined in  
6 the integrated report did not happen  
7 from paddler use. We weren't allowed to  
8 be there. The solution is simple.  
9 Allow the flow regime to dictate the use  
10 on the upper river. The flow regime  
11 works on every other river corridor  
12 across the country, and as the  
13 integrated report points out, the  
14 natural flow regime creates an 80/20  
15 split. Eighty percent of the day  
16 anglers will have access without  
17 boaters. Twenty percent of the days  
18 have potential sharing access. The  
19 management alternative here is proven,  
20 it's legal, and it's nationally  
21 consistent. Thank you.

22 TERRY SEYDEN:

23 All right. Next. Speaker number three,  
24 and the timer is over here to help you  
25 to target your time.

1 CHAD SPANGLER:

2 Hi. I'm Chad Spangler, and I'm  
3 president of the Atlanta White Water  
4 Club. The protection of the Chattooga  
5 headwaters and access to paddlers is a  
6 very important issue for our club.  
7 First, let me be clear that our most  
8 important objective is the protection  
9 and preservation of the headwaters of  
10 the Chattooga River. The integrated  
11 report clearly shows the biophysical  
12 impacts on current users are too high.  
13 We would like to see the overused  
14 campsites nearest the river as well as  
15 user created trails closed and  
16 rehabilitated back to a more natural  
17 state. We would like to see more litter  
18 patrols and increased educational  
19 efforts a patrol has to encourage users  
20 to reduce their impact on the area, as  
21 well as their impact on other users. We  
22 would recommend that all back country  
23 groups be limited to a maximum of 12 per  
24 group. We would like all users to fill  
25 out a self-issued permit each time they

1 use the area just as paddlers are  
2 required to do on the lower sections of  
3 the river. This will provide much  
4 better data for future management  
5 decisions, including information about  
6 who was using the resource and when they  
7 are there. This data could easily be  
8 correlated to weather and flow data to  
9 determine how those factors affect use  
10 by each group. We believe that paddlers  
11 should be allowed access to the  
12 Chattooga headwaters that are equitable  
13 with that of other user groups. The  
14 integrated report show that paddler use  
15 would be low and wouldn't have any  
16 impacts that are not shared equally by  
17 other users. The only case integrated  
18 report makes for limiting paddling is  
19 the potential conflict with a small  
20 number of back country anglers who have  
21 a zero tolerance for boaters. However,  
22 the integrated report has no evidence to  
23 support this claim. The integrated  
24 report has no data on how many users  
25 currently use the river at levels when

1 the river would be at an optimal or even  
2 suboptimal level for paddling. How can  
3 the Forest Service make a decision to  
4 limit conflict when we have no idea how  
5 many people would actually be affected  
6 by one use or another. Flow preferences  
7 largely determine when each group uses  
8 of the river. Without any management  
9 actions there would be a natural  
10 separation of users by flow levels. For  
11 80 percent of the time the anglers would  
12 have the river free of boaters because  
13 of low flows. These low flows are also  
14 the optimal angling flows. On the  
15 remaining 20 percent of days boating use  
16 will be --- will be low because many  
17 optimal paddling flows will happen on  
18 short notice during bad weather or at  
19 night. Poor weather and suboptimal  
20 angling conditions will contribute to  
21 even lower angling use during these  
22 times. Nature dictates that the  
23 opportunity for conflict will be very,  
24 very minimal. Even if there was  
25 evidence to support an argument that

1           there would be conflict between users,  
2           the Forest Chief clearly stated in the  
3           appeal decision that no single user  
4           group has an exclusive right to  
5           solitary, and that any limits on use  
6           should be spread across all user groups.  
7           We would like to thank the Forest  
8           Service and Confluence Research for  
9           their work on the user capacity study.  
10          This is a step in the right direction  
11          for the management of Chattooga  
12          headwaters. Thank you for your  
13          consideration of our comments.

14         TERRY SEYDEN:

15                 Thank you. Next.

16         BERRY NICHOLS:

17                 My name is Barry Nichols. I've been  
18                 here for 68 years. I --- I was born and  
19                 raised up here at Mountain Rest. I've  
20                 got no prepared text. My text today  
21                 will come from right here only, and it's  
22                 going to be directed toward these  
23                 gentlemen right here. Gentleman, when I  
24                 was growing up there we could use the  
25                 river for anything we wished. Now we've

1           been cut off from it except that stretch  
2           of land and river above the 28 bridge.  
3           That is our home up there. That is what  
4           we grew up with. That's where we went  
5           to fish. We went to the whole river.  
6           Now we are somewhat restricted. So,  
7           therefore, I would ask you to restrict  
8           the boaters from that area. Gentlemen,  
9           I hate to see any more of our county  
10          here, just like we talked --- just like  
11          we talked about Stump House Mountain.  
12          We're fighting now for the last part of  
13          our heritage up there on that river. I  
14          could stand here, and I can tell you  
15          things that I was associated with  
16          between the age of one and 20 when I  
17          left her. That we went up that river  
18          above 28 to fish. We didn't have fly  
19          rods. We didn't have no rod and reels.  
20          We had cane poles, but that was the best  
21          time in my life. And I would like for  
22          my children and grandchildren to also  
23          have that opportunity that I had. And,  
24          you know, the boaters has from the 28  
25          bridge all the way to 76 beyond. Is

1           that not enough for you folks? Is that  
2           not enough? What about me? I was a  
3           turkey hunter, and a deer hunter when I  
4           can get out in the woods, but that is  
5           becoming more and more difficult to do.  
6           And that's just like now. I can go out  
7           and turkey hunt in April. I can go out  
8           here and sit down beside the road  
9           somewhere on the trail, and the first  
10          thing I know here comes a group of  
11          people. You hikers, God bless you, I  
12          love all of you, but stay out of the  
13          woods when I'm here hunting in a turkey  
14          hunt. I've had so many times that I  
15          would be standing out there or sitting  
16          up camouflage waiting for the turkey  
17          that I'm trying to call in, and here  
18          come eight or ten people just yak,  
19          yakking up the road. And you know what  
20          happens then. The same thing is true.  
21          I've got one place that I hang a lattice  
22          stand. I can get up there, and I can  
23          sit there, and I can enjoy myself until  
24          other packers come through there. If  
25          you can control the river, why not

1 control the hikers that goes around that  
2 trail, too? I don't have a prepared  
3 text, Gentlemen, and I know my time is  
4 up. But just like I tell the County  
5 Council, give me two more seconds. My  
6 two seconds is this to you Gentlemen:  
7 You hold the future of that river in  
8 your hands. Thank you.

9 TERRY SEYDEN:

10 I think speaker number five is next.

11 DON KINSER:

12 Thank you, Terry. Hello. My name is  
13 Don Kinser. I'm a white water paddler.  
14 I'm an angler. I'm a biker, and I've  
15 enjoy the Chattooga River many hundreds  
16 of times over the last 27 years or so.  
17 My wife and I have a home in Oconee  
18 County. It backs up to the Wild and  
19 scenic River corridor. I'm a member of  
20 ATU, GCA, and AW. Since 1999 I served  
21 as AW's lead volunteer locally for the  
22 14 other headwaters having the remainder  
23 of my time invested in seeking fair,  
24 consistent, nationally consistent,  
25 management of the river. The upper

1 Chattooga is a wonderful place to go to  
2 fish, hike, boat, relax, whatever, in a  
3 remote wilderness setting. It's a  
4 national treasure and a true gem in the  
5 wild and scenic river system. Many in  
6 the surrounding area enjoy this  
7 wonderful place. It's a decent but not  
8 spectacular cold water fishery, a  
9 fishery made possible only by hatcheries  
10 and human intervention. On the other  
11 hand, the Chattooga River is a world  
12 class white water river. I know  
13 firsthand because of my river  
14 experiences all around the world. It's  
15 also why I chose to live there. Many  
16 paddlers from across the country and  
17 around the world come to enjoy this  
18 world class river. The integrated  
19 report clearly shows that the paddling  
20 impacts would be negligible, expected  
21 paddlers use would be low, and most  
22 importantly that the normal flow regime  
23 on the river will naturally segregate  
24 use. Despite the complete lack of  
25 scientific research and data some still

1 continue to claim their opposition to  
2 boating somehow is protecting the  
3 resource. The final study report paints  
4 a completely different picture and boils  
5 the entire issue down to social  
6 conflicts. It seems Chattooga anglers  
7 simply do not like white water boaters,  
8 and, therefore, thinks zoning boaters  
9 off parts of their river seems  
10 reasonable. This is an absurd policy,  
11 and if widely implemented could just as  
12 easily shut anglers out of the quality  
13 fishing. I fully support protecting the  
14 Chattooga River, and I'm hopeful that  
15 finally the Forest Service will do  
16 something to manage use on the upper  
17 river other than simply banning boating.  
18 A good start would be self-issued  
19 permits for all users of the upper river  
20 corridor, including boaters. I want to  
21 emphasize here again the indisputable  
22 fact that the upper Chattooga's normal  
23 flow regime will naturally segregate  
24 anglers and paddlers in time and space.  
25 All the data and research supports this

1 claim. I challenge you, Gentlemen of  
2 the Forest Service, to find a more  
3 eloquent fair and implementable solution  
4 that will simply allow boating on the  
5 upper Chattooga, and let nature take  
6 care of the rest. It works on every  
7 other headwater stream in the Southeast  
8 and indeed, across the country, and it  
9 will work on the Chattooga, too. Any  
10 other decision to ban or limit boating  
11 is simply not defensible based on the  
12 record that you have built. Next I want  
13 to speak a little bit about --- well,  
14 let me finish, and close. In January of  
15 this year I had the great honor and  
16 privilege of participating in the expert  
17 flow channel. What we found during  
18 those two days was truly amazing white  
19 water river. I just hope these two days  
20 of user trials are not the last  
21 opportunity I have or that you have to  
22 legally enjoy this magnificent place  
23 from a boat. The boating ban on the  
24 Chattooga River now in place for 30  
25 years is unfair. I believe it is

1 illegal and just plain wrong. I hope  
2 the Forest Service does the right thing  
3 and reaches a new decision that reverses  
4 this illegal and inequitable ban of  
5 boating use in the upper river. Thank  
6 you.

7 TERRY SEYDEN:

8 Speaker number six.

9 STEVE FRAZIER:

10 Hi. My name is Steve Frazier, and I'm a  
11 --- I'm a white water boater as well.  
12 I'm not nearly as prepared as the rest  
13 of these folks, but I've only got a  
14 couple of quick things I wanted to say.  
15 The first one is the only real issue  
16 with allowing boating on the head water  
17 seems to be a handful of anglers seeing  
18 a handful of boaters a very small  
19 handful of days. I mean, really, there  
20 doesn't really seem to be that big of a  
21 problem to me, and like --- like a  
22 couple of the people before me said, you  
23 know, nature can take its course, and  
24 everyone's interest will --- will be  
25 fulfilled. The flow is like they said,

1 an 80/20 split, so I mean even if at the  
2 best --- even the best for us is only 20  
3 percent of the time, and really it's  
4 much less than that. Everybody knows  
5 that. I challenge the Forest Service,  
6 therefore, to find a more fair,  
7 flexible, legal, protective, and easy to  
8 manage nationally consistent management  
9 scheme. Limiting boating to any further  
10 than having Mother Nature limit it is  
11 just, you know, it's just not feasible  
12 or legal or moral. The other thing I  
13 wanted to say was I agree with my friend  
14 back there in the red shirt that spoke  
15 for the anglers earlier. The first  
16 thing he said completely rang true to  
17 me. He said, "I can go up there and do  
18 anything I want." Well, so do I.  
19 Thanks.

20 TERRY SEYDEN:

21 Speaker number seven.

22 KEVIN COLBURN:

23 Hi. My name is Kevin Colburn. I'm the  
24 National Stewardship Director for  
25 American White Water. I'm from

1 Missoula, Montana. It just really is a  
2 national issue. I'm an ecologist, so  
3 that I'm actually here to talk about  
4 recreation is kind of strange for me,  
5 but I've done a little work on this  
6 issue over the last six years. What  
7 I've learned is that the top ten percent  
8 of the upper Chattooga, it's the top  
9 couple of miles, is in private  
10 ownership. It's also designated by  
11 Congress as a wild and scenic river.  
12 This creates a balance that has to take  
13 place between private property rights  
14 and public trust rights. The balance  
15 has already been struck. The --- the  
16 courts are clear, I think. The Forest  
17 Service policy is very clear that the  
18 Forest Service has the ability to manage  
19 white water boating and boating down the  
20 wild and scenic river, regardless of  
21 land ownership, regardless of  
22 navigability. Why the Forest Service  
23 won't publicly take a stand, or Why the  
24 Forest Service won't publicly take that  
25 stand, even though the policy is really

1 clear about it, is beyond me. We  
2 support both private property rights and  
3 public trust rights. There is a  
4 balance. We can work this out. The  
5 Forest Service has to protect any  
6 paddling under the Wild Scenic Rivers  
7 Act. Instead they have eliminated it.  
8 They are violating the Wild and Scenic  
9 Rivers Act. By not allowing paddling or  
10 any recreation on the upper 1.7 miles  
11 they're breaking the law. So to go a  
12 little bit further, one thing that has  
13 been stated is that the navigability has  
14 never been adjudicated on the upper  
15 river. As I said, at the time it was  
16 relevant, but it has been. The Supreme  
17 Court of the U.S. in the 1800s, late  
18 1800s, changed that, and in that they  
19 basically talked about the Chattooga  
20 River being navigable through its  
21 course. That means that at least the  
22 Grimshawe's Bridge where many floating  
23 trips had begun for the Forest Service  
24 itself, floating began.

25 TERRY SEYDEN:

1 Be respectful.

2 KEVIN COLBURN:

3 Yes, please. Also, the North Carolina  
4 Attorney General has clarified this.  
5 When asked if the public has a right to  
6 float any canoes and kayaks down the  
7 rivers in North Carolina, the Attorney  
8 General said, "Yes." Period. No  
9 ambiguity. The only ambiguity comes in  
10 foraging and scouting since they have  
11 not been resolved. We agree. You know,  
12 obviously, at the time it was 1998, it  
13 had not been resolved yet. We're not  
14 sure if foraging and scouting is  
15 required on this reach because the  
16 Forest Service and the private  
17 landowners wouldn't even let us look at  
18 it. The Forest Service hasn't even been  
19 there in we don't know how many years  
20 according to the public record. So  
21 that's a real concern for us. However,  
22 under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act the  
23 Forest Service has the ability to allow  
24 floating, and that includes foraging and  
25 scouting by any desired definition you

1           can come up with. So with my remaining  
2           20 seconds, I would like to thank  
3           everybody for listening, and from  
4           American White Waters' standpoint  
5           navigability of the upper stretch and  
6           the right to float it is a major issue.  
7           Thank you.

8           TERRY SEYDEN:

9           The next speaker is number eight, and  
10          before he starts, again, the purpose of  
11          today is to hear directly from  
12          individuals their concerns, and just ask  
13          that everybody would respect the ground  
14          rules, and everybody have their fair  
15          time, and listen, and try not to  
16          interrupt. Thank you.

17          LARRY THOMAS:

18          My name is Larry Thomas. I took my  
19          glasses off to read. I'm here  
20          representing a group called The Friends  
21          of Bull Pen. We're a group that's very  
22          concerned as the property owners not  
23          only on Bull Pen Road but in the  
24          Bayner/Cashiers/Highlands area. I,  
25          myself, own some property at 492 Bull

1 Pen Road, which is about four and a half  
2 miles from the Chattooga River. We've  
3 been in this area, myself, nearly 40  
4 years. There's families back there  
5 much, much longer, and we're very  
6 concerned about the Chattooga rain  
7 forest because of the remote solitude  
8 environment it creates, and these are  
9 the two qualities that are really under  
10 assault not only from developers, as was  
11 mentioned earlier, but just the overall  
12 increase in recreational use and  
13 population growth. You know as well as  
14 I do that in the last 20 years there has  
15 been tremendous growth in the  
16 Southeastern United States. I'll name a  
17 couple, Atlanta, Charlotte. There are  
18 many more. And this means more  
19 recreation use. It means more second  
20 and third homes. It means more and more  
21 of an impact on this area. There are  
22 more cars at the trail heads. There are  
23 more new homes. There are more new golf  
24 courses. The growth is truly  
25 phenomenal. Mr. Frazier indicated that

1 in 1998 there was an estimated four  
2 million kayakers in the U.S., and by  
3 2004 this had risen to ten million, an  
4 increase of 1.5. We believe that  
5 allowing boaters, a further development  
6 and further encroachment on the upper  
7 Chattooga rain forest would exacerbate  
8 the unsustainable development in the  
9 region since the number of kayakers are  
10 surely going to keep climbing. Allowing  
11 boating in the upper Chattooga rain  
12 forest from Grimshawes Road down to  
13 Burrells Ford would just be one more,  
14 one more addition to this wonderful  
15 area. And I believe it has began to  
16 move beyond its carrying capacity. The  
17 traffic on the roads during peak times  
18 with the associated noise and pollution  
19 is already becoming pretty unbearable in  
20 the overall area. The traffic on the  
21 roads, the impact on the region aside,  
22 the impact on the hikers, backpackers,  
23 fishermen, swimmers, and the trails, the  
24 trail heads, I think will end up being  
25 pretty major. Friends of Bull Pen

1 believe that by not allowing boating  
2 does not constitute a lack of  
3 management. It, in fact, is management,  
4 in our opinion. We believe that the  
5 best management for the upper Chattooga  
6 rain forest is to restrict the use, not  
7 expand it. They say that --- someone  
8 has said there is no scientific evidence  
9 to back up this impact, but I believe  
10 common sense would tell you otherwise.  
11 I'll conclude by saying that we believe,  
12 again, the best management practice is  
13 in some cases to restrict, and in this  
14 case to restrict what we believe to be a  
15 very reasonable class of overall boating  
16 on this wonderful treasure. There are  
17 plenty of other rivers and creeks for us  
18 boaters, I have two boats and two  
19 kayaks, to use without putting more  
20 pressure on this very unique national  
21 treasure. Thank you.

22 TERRY SEYDEN:

23 Thank you. Number eight coming up, so  
24 Nine, ten, 11 I'll --- actually number  
25 nine. Okay. You're nine up.

1 CHARLENE COLEMAN:

2 Hello. I'm Charlene Coleman. I'm an  
3 American Canoe Association certified  
4 white water Kayak instructor of 16  
5 years, white water rescue, swift water  
6 rescue, technician for ten, trained by  
7 the Safety who are trained fire  
8 department for most rescue squads. I've  
9 been white water kayaking 23 years and  
10 fishing for over 40. The Chief of the  
11 Forest Service clearly stated the Forest  
12 Service job is to educate the public on  
13 safety, provide assistance for search  
14 and rescue, not mandates. This makes  
15 safety, search, rescue not an issue in  
16 this process. If we do address it at  
17 all we are addressing education only and  
18 see it for what it really is. First I  
19 would like to address the fact that  
20 rescue squads do not haul chain saws,  
21 bulldozers, or machetes into the area to  
22 emasculate a resource. When we search  
23 we use low impact techniques and follow  
24 guidelines of the Forest Service for the  
25 area's protection. Hiker, fishermen

1 services are usually the most labor  
2 intensive due to the fact that these  
3 groups participate in this sport alone.  
4 Unless you're on top of the white river  
5 when something happens rescue is up to  
6 paddlers. There is usually no search  
7 set in the water. Paddlers are usually  
8 in groups of four to six for safety and  
9 support. Secondly, the rescue squads  
10 are taught using manual techniques  
11 written and developed by paddlers.  
12 Experienced practice in (inaudible)  
13 nonoxygen rich environment requires  
14 someone that embraces white water  
15 (inaudible). American White Water wrote  
16 the safety code. Paddlers teach the  
17 courses. Paddlers make up most of the  
18 country's white water volunteer rescue  
19 squads. A boater potentially capable of  
20 paddling their courses is very skilled  
21 in the sport, rescue, first aid, and  
22 split second decisions. On any given  
23 weekday, weekend or weekday, the fire  
24 department and at least two rescues, in  
25 the summer at least ten. Two require

1 technical gear we all carry and skills  
2 we practice. Rod Barron was rescued,  
3 recovered, resuscitated in a class by  
4 the rapid, and then maintained and  
5 evaced by boaters out of the head water  
6 out of the Chattooga. Rod Barron lives  
7 today because boaters train for the  
8 worst. We don't have time. We are the  
9 help. The second concern of boaters in  
10 the headwaters as stated has been stated  
11 and is in the record. Lone fishermen of  
12 70 years or 80 and older with a  
13 questionable health history should be  
14 your greatest concern. We don't know  
15 where they are, where they went, how  
16 long they've been down, and when they  
17 wade in water over their calf they don't  
18 normally wear life jackets. When in the  
19 water they rarely tell others the  
20 location of their favorite fishing hole.  
21 All of these make my job as a rescuer  
22 difficult, if not impossible. Allowing  
23 boaters in the headwaters introduces a  
24 positive safety environment. If  
25 fishermen choose to increase their

1 exposure to risk by fishing at high  
2 water, on slick banks in the water's  
3 edge, and boaters offer a first line of  
4 defense available to user groups that  
5 typically didn't have a chance. Thank  
6 you.

7 TERRY SEYDEN:

8 The next is number ten. We have 11, 12,  
9 and 13 coming.

10 ROGER HUFF:

11 Good afternoon. My name is Roger Huff.  
12 I'm the Vice President for Atlanta White  
13 Water Club. I just have a few points I  
14 would like to make. Number one, we  
15 agree with the American White Water's  
16 comments on the integrated report and  
17 ask that the Forest Service make their  
18 remissions prior to making any  
19 management decisions on that integrated  
20 report. Specifically we believe that  
21 the estimated use of the river by  
22 boaters and anglers during optimal  
23 paddling weather is highly inflated.  
24 Members of our club who have found the  
25 headwaters and the overflow are

1 convinced that overflow will receive  
2 more use. We do not believe the  
3 guesstimates of these levels are an  
4 adequate basis for managing the  
5 facility. That's all I have. Thank  
6 you.

7 TERRY SEYDEN:

8 Thank you. Speaker number 11.

9 MELODY GRANT SHEALY:

10 Good afternoon. My name is Melody Grant  
11 Shealy, and I live here in Walhalla. I  
12 was born and raised here in this area,  
13 as did my mother's family and my  
14 father's family also born and raised in  
15 this area. Over the years my family has  
16 enjoyed fishing, camping, hiking up  
17 there on Chattooga, and I feel like this  
18 area in question that has brought us all  
19 to this room today is very important.  
20 It's one of the last true wilderness  
21 areas that we have left, and it should  
22 remain that way. Areas like this are  
23 disappearing every single day in this  
24 country at an alarming rate, and  
25 unfortunately, most of the time it's

1 from excessive greed. The bad part is  
2 once it's gone, it's gone. There's no  
3 turning back and no undoing what it  
4 cost. I'm worried and have many  
5 concerns regarding the detriment to this  
6 particular area of the Chattooga  
7 wilderness with the building of in roads  
8 and parking lots to accommodate the  
9 traffic that will come with opening up  
10 this area. And once again I stress that  
11 once the damage is done, it is done, and  
12 there's no turning back. There is  
13 certainly more than enough river below  
14 this area to suit everyone's  
15 recreational wants and needs. I urge  
16 you to please keep the upper part of  
17 Chattooga just as it is now, a rare last  
18 piece of unspoiled beautiful pristine  
19 wilderness area. Now that's priceless  
20 Thank you.

21 TERRY SEYDEN:

22 Thank you. Speaker number 12.

23 J. HAROLD THOMAS:

24 Good afternoon. My name is J. Harold  
25 Thomas, and I've lived here in Walhalla

1           for 71 years. I was part of several  
2           conservations groups that have been  
3           working very hard on saving Stump House  
4           Mountain from a housing development and  
5           placed it into a conservation easement.  
6           And we can see the light at the end of  
7           the tunnel now on this. There will be  
8           over 1,000 acres with a conservation  
9           easement adjacent to the Oconee --- I  
10          mean, to the historic tunnel as well as  
11          the second tunnel, the middle tunnel,  
12          and the Isaqueena Falls. Equally  
13          important in my mind is saving the  
14          wilderness area of the Chattooga above  
15          the Highway 28 Bridge. You know, if the  
16          Lord lets time last for several hundred  
17          more years, what are we going to do  
18          about places like what we have now just  
19          above the bridge for our children's  
20          grandchildren and their grandchildren?  
21          You know, we're losing thousands of  
22          acres a day as we speak across this  
23          country to developments, and it has to  
24          be planning to have enough room for  
25          development for people to live. There

1 has to be planning for people who enjoy  
2 angling to have places to do that. But  
3 my main concern is the development of  
4 the river above the 28 bridge, and to  
5 me, building a road and a parking lot is  
6 development from what is there now,  
7 wilderness. So I would respectfully  
8 request you gentlemen and ladies that's  
9 in the business of making this decision  
10 to consider our future generations that  
11 have a place to go and hike, or whatever  
12 they do, whether they fish or not, it's  
13 just the fact that it's a wilderness  
14 place that has not been touched.  
15 Please, please, please. That's my plea.  
16 Thank you very much.

17 TERRY SEYDEN:

18 Speaker number 13.

19 EDWARD STOCKMAN:

20 Yes. My name is Edward Stockman. I'm a  
21 member of the American White Water  
22 Association. Gentlemen, I would like  
23 for the opportunity to paddle the upper  
24 section legally, please Thank you.

25 TERRY SEYDEN:

1           Number 14.

2           HANK BELEW:

3           Thank you. My name is Hank Belew. I  
4           have lived and worked in the Chattooga  
5           Watershed for most of my life. I am  
6           also the Chairman of the Board of  
7           Directors for the Chattooga Conservancy,  
8           and it's in their behalf that I'm  
9           speaking today. The Chattooga  
10          Conservancy's purpose is to preserve,  
11          protect, and restore that outstanding  
12          and remarkable resource that is the  
13          Chattooga River. Our petition is that  
14          boating should not be allowed above the  
15          Highway 28 bridge, and there are many  
16          reasons for this decision not to allow  
17          boating on the upper river, and I will  
18          address a few of them here. There is  
19          very limited access to the river at the  
20          headwaters. Heavy boaters would have  
21          been put in and take outs which would  
22          tear up the banks --- I have seen it ---  
23          and create runoff and erosion. It would  
24          also mean more parking lots and more  
25          trails on which to access the road.

1 With this increase of use would also  
2 come an increase in the possibility of  
3 accidents. The needs for upwards of 100  
4 rescue workers and emergency medical  
5 personnel to get to the river and to get  
6 the victim out of the river corridor  
7 would have an extremely dangerous impact  
8 on the wild and scenic river corridor  
9 and/or the Yellow top rock wilderness  
10 area. Many rapids such as Fork Falls  
11 have a --- have limited routes for  
12 foraging around them. Would this  
13 negatively affect the environment around  
14 this area? We certainly think so.  
15 Increased traffic into the river  
16 corridor would certainly mean an  
17 increased risk of the accidental  
18 introduction of domestic species, both  
19 plant and animal in nature. An article  
20 in the July 4th edition of a Cashiers,  
21 North Carolina newspaper, the *Crossroads*  
22 *Chronicle*, about the Tuskegee River,  
23 Mark Singleton, Executive Director of  
24 American White Water said about the  
25 Cashiers area, and I quote, "You're

1 centrally located for a lot of white  
2 water boating. You've got really good  
3 mix. There aren't many places in the  
4 country that have as much good white  
5 water paddling within a two hour  
6 radius." The editorial of the same  
7 edition adds to this saying, "The upper  
8 Chattooga isn't exactly going to be the  
9 cream of the crop of waters for boaters  
10 to choose from in our area. We're truly  
11 blessed to live in an area where boaters  
12 have an abundance of boating choices  
13 within a one hour radius of Cashiers."  
14 This brings a question to my mind. If  
15 the Chattooga is not such a great ride,  
16 and if there is so much more good white  
17 water in such close proximity, why would  
18 the boaters need or want the upper  
19 Chattooga? For these and many other  
20 reasons the Chattooga Conservative  
21 position is that there should be no  
22 boating allowed above the Highway 28  
23 bridge. An alternative possibility  
24 could be that boaters may be allowed at  
25 high water levels from the iron bridge

1 at Bull Pen Road down to Highway 28 so  
2 long as the number of groups would be  
3 limited to four boats in each group so  
4 long as the number of groups would be  
5 limited to four per day, and most of  
6 these groups would be limited to six.  
7 We also feel that no living debris such  
8 as downed trees should be removed from  
9 the river in order to facilitate  
10 boating, thereby not altering the  
11 wilderness. Thank you.

12 TERRY SEYDEN:

13 Speaker number 15.

14 MARK HOFFMAN:

15 My name is Mark Hoffman. I'm from North  
16 Carolina. I've been fishing for 45  
17 years, and I've been white water rafting  
18 for six years. As a fisherman I am  
19 ashamed that my fellow fisherman are so  
20 smug as to think that they alone are the  
21 best stewards of the upper Chattooga.  
22 As a fisherman I am ashamed that my  
23 fellow fisherman are so arrogant as to  
24 think that a use of disinformation,  
25 scare tactics, and to convince the

1 uninformed to take their side in this  
2 debate. As an American citizen I'm  
3 appalled that my Forest Service has  
4 mismanaged the upper Chattooga for 30  
5 years, and yes, and I said my Forest  
6 Service, your Forest Service. As an  
7 American citizen I'm appalled that my  
8 Forest Service has totally ignored the  
9 Public Trust Doctrine as it applies to  
10 the United States of America. As an  
11 American citizen I'm appalled that my  
12 Forest Service totally ignores, clearly  
13 written Supreme Court Rulings, and also  
14 State court Rulings which leads to the  
15 ambiguity where we reside today. As an  
16 American citizen I am absolutely amazed  
17 that my Forest Service has repeatedly  
18 ignored their own United States Forest  
19 Service-issued manual and handbook.  
20 They failed to regulate usage only to  
21 the extent necessary to provide for user  
22 safety, to protect the resources, and to  
23 receive recreation experiences. They  
24 failed to direct the river recreation  
25 services and a management plan on the

1 nearby rivers. They failed to manage  
2 river uses and using recreation as  
3 possible. They've failed on major plans  
4 on national user groups. They failed to  
5 direct to whatever becomes necessary for  
6 usage so that all potential users have a  
7 fair and equitable chance to obtain  
8 access to the river. This is their  
9 manual, not my comment. They failed to  
10 ensure high quality exchange and provide  
11 access to as many people as possible.  
12 Again, their manual, not my comment.  
13 They failed to enhance recreation manual  
14 to a minimum of regulation and law  
15 enforcement. Again, their manual, not  
16 my comment. They failed to manage  
17 recreation usage of the actual forest  
18 to meet national needs, whether to meet  
19 the needs of individuals or nearby  
20 communities. Again, a mandate directly  
21 out of their manual, not my comment.  
22 They failed to maximize visitor freedom  
23 within the wilderness and minimize the  
24 fair controls and restrictions. They  
25 failed to ensure that forest users

1           required maintain necessary skills for  
2           primitive travel by canoe, which is  
3           required. They failed to provide  
4           outstanding opportunities for solitude  
5           or (inaudible) I'm going to (inaudible)  
6           as a voter and proud that everywhere  
7           else (inaudible) that I reside in  
8           (inaudible) fishermen work hand in hand  
9           with voters for the betterment of  
10          (inaudible) resources. As a voter I am  
11          proud (inaudible) and of the stewardship  
12          (inaudible) And I'm most proud of my  
13          boater friends (inaudible) who stand  
14          ready to work with anyone who is willing  
15          to work with us. My name is Mark  
16          Hoffman (inaudible) boater.

17       TERRY SEYDEN:

18           (Inaudible) three minutes. Try to stick  
19           to the minutes. Okay. So (Inaudible)  
20           number 16.

21       JENNY CAROTHERS:

22           Hi. My name is Jenny Carothers. I'm  
23           (inaudible) on the river (inaudible) to  
24           the quiet of the woods, listening to  
25           birds (inaudible) wild flowers do

1 appear. (Inaudible) Lucky, very lucky.  
2 We want to see the river (inaudible)  
3 There are several falls that we're able  
4 to go through with a small place behind  
5 the cascading water. I love it when I  
6 look through to the (inaudible) behind  
7 the waterfall is to know the scent of  
8 moss and rushing water. (Inaudible) I  
9 don't want to wander if somebody is  
10 going to (inaudible) the Chattooga could  
11 become a very real one. (Inaudible) and  
12 does not allow (inaudible) swimmers.  
13 (Inaudible) people simply cannot move  
14 quickly through the water in order to  
15 avoid being hit. The upper Chattooga is  
16 very rocky with (inaudible) falls.  
17 (Inaudible) would be extremely dangerous  
18 for both kayakers and swimmers.  
19 Swimming in the Chattooga in a very  
20 popular spring, summer, and fall  
21 activity. (Inaudible) swimmers to  
22 (inaudible) that they want to  
23 (inaudible) Allowing kayaks in the upper  
24 Chattooga makes risk assessment by  
25 swimmers much more difficult. Why

1           should a few kayakers who are  
2           (inaudible) themselves (inaudible) to  
3           hundreds of swimmers and waders.  
4           (Inaudible) areas for swimming purpose.  
5           (Inaudible) facility upper Chattooga as  
6           well. Please don't allow any  
7           (inaudible) do this. Thank you.

8           TERRY SEYDEN:

9           I think we're down to 17. Thank you,  
10          sir.

11          DICK RUST:

12          I'm Dick Rust. I tried to listen to the  
13          heart of the matter. The Wild and  
14          Scenic River Act was put into place four  
15          decades ago as part of a larger and  
16          unspoken program by government ongoing  
17          to take land all across the USA.  
18          Anybody not believing this had better  
19          look at the year by year increases of  
20          the land owned by government. For  
21          government to take control of land  
22          credible excuses are always needed. In  
23          this case government was told by  
24          Congress to keep specified rivers in  
25          their pristine wild state for our

1 children, of course. Let's go with this  
2 pretense. Who has the great secret of  
3 maintaining a wild and scenic river?  
4 Every person in this room does. You  
5 leave the land alone, and the more it is  
6 kept people free, the closer you come to  
7 the wild pristine state. The U.S.  
8 Forest Service knows this secret, too,  
9 and they've been authorized to put it to  
10 work. So why are we here? Why has this  
11 process gone on for several years, and  
12 why has several millions of taxpayer  
13 dollars been spent to show this pretense  
14 of democratic input? It's because  
15 someone in D.C. has set out to interfere  
16 with proper wild and scenic river  
17 management. Why? We, the people, are  
18 being kept in the dark, sidetracked, and  
19 worn down with endless bureaucratic  
20 procedures, acronyms, and nonsense that  
21 leaves us all feeling tired, helpless,  
22 and stupid so that we will not think to  
23 ask the real questions. While we have  
24 no recourse the local regional Forest  
25 Service does. It's all their choice

1           between carrying out proper management  
2           of the river or the great contortions  
3           obeying their superiors of D.C. Now  
4           then, as to kayaking. Anybody with a  
5           shred of honesty knows a wild and scenic  
6           river, a true wild and scenic river,  
7           cannot remain so and also be a  
8           playground for Olympic kayakers who want  
9           to be Olympic kayakers, and a wild and  
10          scenic river cannot remain so for sure  
11          when the degradation of the river occurs  
12          resulting from a new precedent allowing  
13          all to come to the river with whatever  
14          equipment they choose, each group  
15          arriving by means of the latest pop  
16          sport lobbies threatening to load our  
17          Forest Service with lawsuits. All we  
18          can do is put pressure on the Forest  
19          Service at local and regional levels to  
20          do the right thing, possibly requiring  
21          them to disobey D.C. The Forest Service  
22          properly has the power to make  
23          decisions. Public input is not  
24          required. The public input is being  
25          demanded of us anyway with full advanced

1 knowledge of its divisiveness. This  
2 entire exercise only exists to keep back  
3 future criticism from what has already  
4 been decided in D.C. When criticism  
5 inevitably arises, the new policy has  
6 resulted from a full and open public  
7 process and analysis. Even though such  
8 democratic appearances cause taxpayers  
9 millions, even when the Forest Service  
10 policy is not supposed to be arrived at  
11 by democratic means in the first place.  
12 Should we all be voting on --- should we  
13 all be voting on how many people get to  
14 use the Chattooga corridor and what toys  
15 do they bring with them? No. Actual  
16 experience judgment should prevail, not  
17 democracy, not oppressive lawsuits, and  
18 most certainly not high level political  
19 appointees in D.C. making decisions  
20 unrelated to what is actually taking  
21 place in the river corridor. Thank you.

22 TERRY SEYDEN:

23 Number 18.

24 JOSEPH GATINS:

25 Supervisor Thomas, Supervisor Hilliard,

1           thank you for having us here today.  
2           It's good to see this big a crowd out  
3           for this important issue. My name is  
4           Joe Gatins. I'm a full-time resident of  
5           Clayton County, Georgia, and the  
6           unincorporated Toccoa community which is  
7           right close to the wild and scenic river  
8           corridor. I stand before you today to  
9           make a personal plea to urge the U.S.  
10          Government to stick to its guns and keep  
11          the 21 miles of the upper Chattooga free  
12          of all boats, kayaks, tubes, canoes, or  
13          any other watercraft just as you have  
14          and the Forest Service have kept it free  
15          of four wheelers, ATVs, all horses, pack  
16          horses, covered wagons, mountain bikes,  
17          and dirt bikes for the past 31 years.  
18          Three decades of this management for  
19          pedestrian only traffic only proves to  
20          me that you made the right decision  
21          three decades ago. You made the right  
22          decision in 2004, and I trust you will  
23          make the right decision again today. I  
24          do challenge you to stand up to the  
25          pressures that the Forest Service is

1 getting from Washington on them to do  
2 just the opposite. The Forest Service  
3 in this case represents all Americans,  
4 and I believe, that you are legally  
5 bound above all under Federal law to pay  
6 special attention to the needs of the  
7 wild natural resource that you  
8 successfully have protected so far. Now  
9 I take this personally because I was a  
10 trail maintainer, a volunteer trail  
11 maintainer, for the very Forest Service  
12 that we're here talking about today. I  
13 broke about three sling blades and lost  
14 countless clippers for this exercise,  
15 not to mention a little bit of sweat,  
16 and I grew to appreciate that through  
17 these years, how truly beautiful, and  
18 remote, and wild this area really is.  
19 And I believe it should be one that all  
20 Americans should have a genuine right to  
21 experience as it is today in untraveled  
22 fashion in the southern Appalachians. I  
23 also believe there is a time and place  
24 for a different type of experience on  
25 the water of Chattooga, and it is a very

1 different experience. I took how  
2 different it was --- on Memorial Day  
3 weekend when I just happened to go down  
4 to Bull Sluice, one of the favorite  
5 spots on the lower river, and I can tell  
6 you it's a --- it's a fun place. There  
7 are a lot of people there, 50 cars,  
8 about a half a dozen motorcycles in the  
9 parking lot, countless rafters,  
10 kayakers, golfers, swimmers, families  
11 having fun in a big festive atmosphere,  
12 and this is the management that you  
13 provide today, and it's appropriate  
14 management for that section of the  
15 river. That same weekend I was up on  
16 Norton Mill Creek. Went down seven  
17 miles to Norton Mill Creek on the  
18 so-called county line road, and I had  
19 the forest to myself. About the only  
20 thing that I heard was a pileated  
21 woodpecker. The difference between  
22 these two experiences is one that I  
23 believe we need to protect and safeguard  
24 for the long term. So I'm going to  
25 challenge you in the very end to keep

1           your eye on the truly meaningful  
2           experience that occurs in this area, and  
3           to protect in this twenty-first century  
4           America the outstanding remarkable value  
5           known as true solitude. Thank you for  
6           your time. And I'll be submitting  
7           written comments on that as well.

8           TERRY SEYDEN:

9           Thank you. Again, I want to thank the  
10          group for respecting everybody's  
11          individual right to express their  
12          opinion, even though it may be different  
13          from your own and without interruption.  
14          Speaker number 19. Thank you.

15          TOM MCINNIS:

16          Good afternoon. My name is Tom McInnis.  
17          I'm a resident from Clemson, South  
18          Carolina. (Inaudible) I want to  
19          address just some fairly specific issues  
20          with you this afternoon, or make some  
21          suggestions to the Forest Service.  
22          Number one is the importance of the head  
23          waters of South Carolina triads. South  
24          Carolina has many tourists that people  
25          travel like Georgia and South Carolina.

1           Of the rivers in South Carolina visited  
2           by the state's  
3           Anglers, the Chattooga, is by far the  
4           best water. Because of its size anglers  
5           can disperse and experience solitude and  
6           (inaudible) in the area. Also the  
7           chance to (inaudible) are higher than  
8           other rivers in the state. (Inaudible)  
9           anglers and particularly Back packing  
10          anglers are specifically two of the  
11          premier (inaudible) fishery in the  
12          state. Back country anglers and fly  
13          fishing (inaudible) solitude and  
14          catching wild trout, unlike full country  
15          anglers is primarily fishing stock trout  
16          and more trawler crowding. (inaudible)  
17          To reach above normal for bridge or wild  
18          trout fishing, based on antedotal  
19          evidence wild trout (inaudible) service  
20          and increase traffic on the river would  
21          barely reduce the catch rates. But the  
22          headwater open to paddlers, depending on  
23          the intensity of the activity some or  
24          many of these back country anglers will  
25          be displaced. Unfortunately, there

1           aren't many rivers in South Carolina  
2           that can substitute for the Chattooga  
3           River. I would urge the Forest Service  
4           to adopt a goal of no displacement of  
5           current users of the Chattooga  
6           headwaters in developing their  
7           management plans. The second point I  
8           wish to make is regards to the  
9           preservation of wildlife refuge and  
10          wilderness area. There are two regions  
11          of the river that (inaudible) now that  
12          the current (inaudible). The Rock Gorge  
13          area and the region between Bull Pen  
14          Road at Ellicott Rock. Opening these  
15          regions to boating essentially creates a  
16          new trail, a river trail which will be  
17          making a change in the current  
18          conditions. Lack of sufficient study of  
19          wildlife in these two areas one would  
20          assume that to lessen chance of human  
21          contact as it currently exists would  
22          make these areas more of a refuge to  
23          wildlife. But most important in my view  
24          is Bull Pen Road Ellicott Rock Reach  
25          which lies in the dedicated wilderness

1 section of the forest and which for the  
2 preservation of the wilderness area is  
3 top priority. In order to protect the  
4 wilderness character for this area  
5 minimizing human intrusion should also  
6 be a priority. I would like to  
7 recommend that in the absence of a  
8 proposed study of wildlife and the  
9 impact of human intrusion that the  
10 Forest Service adopt a policy of no  
11 degradation in these two Regions and  
12 maintain the current trailless state.  
13 Thank you.

14 TERRY SEYDEN:

15 Okay. Now speaker number 20.

16 TOM WELANDER:

17 Thank you for allowing me to express my  
18 views, and more importantly for  
19 opportunity to hear other points of  
20 view. I'm Tom Welander, I enjoy the  
21 river corridor mostly by canoe. The  
22 first of three points I would like to  
23 make concerns conservation. My number  
24 one priority with regard to the  
25 management and policy governing the

1 Chattooga headwaters is conservation of  
2 the natural resource. I would like to  
3 see the forest managed in such a way  
4 that the impacts of existing users are  
5 reduced. When I first explored the  
6 headwaters river corridor I expected to  
7 find pristine forest. What I found were  
8 signs of intensive use with substantial  
9 degrading impacts between Elicot's Rock  
10 and Burrells Ford. If I had to make a  
11 choice, I would rather have human use  
12 reduced overall in order to preserve the  
13 precious natural resource than to have  
14 the boating ban lifted. If it ever  
15 comes down to river versus people, my  
16 sympathy goes to the river. My second  
17 point relates to the findings of the  
18 user capacity study. Based on my  
19 reading of the user capacity study its  
20 findings would appear to support lifting  
21 the boating ban in the headwaters. This  
22 conclusion is based on (a) the small  
23 expected quantity of interaction between  
24 boaters and other users; and (b) the  
25 lack of incremental environmental

1 degradation caused by the additional  
2 users. The only concession I allow to  
3 this conclusion is that I would support  
4 a continuation of the boating ban on  
5 some fraction of the river, where other  
6 --- where other resource degrading  
7 activities such as development in the  
8 quarter mile corridor, stopping non-  
9 native fish, and group camping are also  
10 prohibited. A total ban of headwaters  
11 boating does not make sense to me. My  
12 third point is to acknowledge that  
13 boating in the headwaters could have  
14 some effect on anglers' solitude. The  
15 capacity study finds that river levels  
16 support simultaneous use by anglers and  
17 boaters on an estimated ten weekend days  
18 per year. If, indeed, the boating ban  
19 is lifted, I feel like it is absolutely  
20 necessary to acknowledge that on those  
21 occasions boating might indeed degrade  
22 the experience of other users. I  
23 respect and empathize with anyone who  
24 believes something is being taken away  
25 from them in this circumstance. I'm

1           staggered by the expressions of  
2           appreciation for the Chattooga  
3           headwaters, and I'm hearing especially  
4           from some of the long-time residents,  
5           and so let's stick together. Thanks.

6       TERRY SEYDEN:

7           All right. Speaker number 21.

8       JOHN CAROTHERS:

9           Okay. My name is John Carothers, and  
10          I'm a biology professor. My family  
11          loves visiting the (inaudible) and  
12          watching wildlife on the Chattooga  
13          River. And it is on behalf of the  
14          wildlife that I speak to you today.  
15          Just like white water kayakers each type  
16          of wildlife has habitat requirements.  
17          But people and wildlife face very  
18          different constraints. The activities  
19          of mountain bikers, equestrian riders,  
20          rock climbers, and dune buggy riders are  
21          allowed in many areas, but prohibited in  
22          others due to conflicts of management  
23          objectives. But that's okay. These  
24          people have other options and other  
25          locations. Regulations is the norm;

1           it's not the exception. American White  
2           Water suggests that the kayakers should  
3           not face restrictions that other outdoor  
4           groups encounter every day. So why are  
5           they different? They're not. They just  
6           think they should be. What we have  
7           learned by comparing habitat to  
8           (inaudible) is out of step with the  
9           needs of the wildlife and the management  
10          plans set up to protect them giving them  
11          refuge from ever increasing encroachment  
12          of humans. Wildlife has habitat  
13          requirements and needs. Take the great  
14          blue herons. They need uncharted  
15          waterways for foraging. They spook and  
16          fly downstream a bit when disturbed.  
17          The same is true for Kingfishers. Water  
18          thrushes, (inaudible) will tolerate  
19          streamside visits a bit, but not to the  
20          extent of parades. A kayaker is by  
21          nature a moving disturbance, and as the  
22          great blue heron flies downstream, so  
23          does the kayaker. There is only so far  
24          downstream the great blue heron can go,  
25          and the entire time that timid bird is

1 pushed ever further away from where it  
2 wanted to be. That bird and all the  
3 others can't come here today and ask for  
4 what they need, a stretch of river where  
5 they aren't going to be disturbed.  
6 American White Water has won various  
7 lawsuits to keep jet skis off of rivers.  
8 They deem them inappropriate. Yet try  
9 to ask for rules to apply to them, and  
10 suddenly they are a very, very  
11 persecuted people. What about the rest  
12 of the wildlife though? The idea of  
13 unmanaged kayaking sounds great and  
14 liberating to a kayaker, but that may  
15 not be the perception to a child wading  
16 in the river or an otter protecting its  
17 young. Beaches have separate zones for  
18 swimmers. Swimmers here, kayakers, wind  
19 surfers, surfers go over there. Why not  
20 rivers? In fact, that's the way the  
21 Chattooga is right now. All creatures  
22 big and small should be able to enjoy  
23 the resource that they already do.  
24 Changing the existing policy, which was  
25 wisely formulated, is unnecessary. This

1 meeting should be a celebration of how  
2 well all have been served. Nature's  
3 interests will only be served when man's  
4 policy remembers the needs of wildlife  
5 over the entire watershed. Thank you  
6 for listening.

7 TERRY SEYDEN:

8 Number 22.

9 AMY CHASE:

10 Yes. I'm Amy Chase, and first of all I  
11 have been very, very tired of this  
12 business of anglers versus boaters and  
13 boaters versus anglers. And I'm here  
14 mostly today to start off talking about  
15 the swimmers because I happen to live  
16 near Slide Rock, and I see a lot of  
17 swimmers swimming there, and I see  
18 families enjoying it. And I don't  
19 really want my children and my  
20 grandchildren to be slammed by boaters  
21 coming over waterfalls, so I'm not  
22 particularly in favor of adding to the  
23 congestion and confusion at the river.  
24 Swimming takes place all summer. It is  
25 a temperature dependent rather than a

1 flow dependent activity, and I would  
2 certainly like to see something done  
3 between May and September, or whenever,  
4 that would certainly limit the use by  
5 boaters at that time of the year. I  
6 think that I would like to let the  
7 children splash around and feel free to  
8 splash around in the water. The local  
9 swimming holes are already very  
10 congested. The parking is an enormous  
11 problem both at Bull Pen and at Slide  
12 Rock. I'm always convinced that I'm  
13 going to hear some kid has been killed  
14 by a car zooming along the road because  
15 there is no parking allowed or open  
16 space parking spaces anywhere along  
17 those roads, and so kids get in and out  
18 of cars right on the road. That makes  
19 me very nervous. I also think that  
20 there should be some sort of facility  
21 for garbage pails, portable things which  
22 would take care of refuse that people  
23 leave because there now are many people  
24 who come and use both the Bull Pen and  
25 Slide Rock, and I would like to see some

1 provision made for that so that the  
2 river continues and the areas around the  
3 river continues to be clean and sanitary  
4 for people to use. I also worry, and I  
5 know we've heard about the rescue today,  
6 and I worry a lot about rescue. I think  
7 that some of the areas are hard to  
8 access, and I think that people will  
9 find that it's an expensive and risky  
10 thing to go in and have to rescue. I  
11 don't care who it is, whether it's a  
12 boater or fisherman, or anybody else  
13 using the river, a hiker or a swimmer.  
14 I still think it's a major, major  
15 investment on many levels, and the more  
16 people that are using the river, the  
17 more frequently these sorts of --- of  
18 events will occur. To put it just a  
19 little bit in perspective, 24 of the 39,  
20 or 60 percent of the fatalities on the  
21 Chattooga since 1970 have been related  
22 to white water boating, and given that  
23 the 00 section of the Chattooga is where  
24 everyone wants to go, I would only  
25 foresee we might have a little more of

1           that.  So I would like to see limited  
2           boating use.  There's already a  
3           limitation in the Pisgah, and I would  
4           like to see it here, too.  Thank you.

5           TERRY SEYDEN:

6           Okay.  Speaker number 23.

7           JIM GOREE:

8           Thanks.  I'm Jim Goree.  I'm a kayaker,  
9           and I strongly support kayakers having  
10          access to the river as everyone else  
11          does.  Just a little background.  We  
12          moved to Clemson, South Carolina, in  
13          '66.  I was on the faculty at the  
14          University.  I retired in '96.  I first  
15          fished the Chattooga around Burrells  
16          Ford in '66.  I first paddled the  
17          Chattooga from Burrells Ford down to 28  
18          Bridge about '68.  I've been a kayaker  
19          ever since.  It was legal then.  I'm a  
20          paddler, by the way.  I see no  
21          justification for kayakers, boaters to  
22          be restricted.  We do the least amount  
23          of damage.  We don't damage trails.  I  
24          don't slash tires.  I don't throw beer  
25          bottles on the bank, and nor do other

1 kayakers. We seem to be excluded. At  
2 least it's inferred that we do all of  
3 this damage. The trails are damaged,  
4 the camping sites are damaged. Why are  
5 we excluded? What is it about boaters  
6 that restricts us but everybody else is  
7 okay. Fishermen, and hiking, climb down  
8 the banks. We'll climb down the banks,  
9 but we go in at one place, and get out a  
10 mile down river. We do the least amount  
11 of damage, least intrusive. I see no  
12 reason to not remove the ban. Thanks.

13 TERRY SEYDEN:

14 Speaker number 24.

15 EDDIE MARTIN:

16 My name is Eddie Martin. I'm the  
17 president of Home Preservation and  
18 Stewardship Trust. Our organization  
19 work closely with upstate forever and  
20 the nature conserve to preserve 1,000  
21 acres along Stump House Mountain. I've  
22 lived here all my life, and I've  
23 traveled these mountains and rivers  
24 since I was a young man. I participated  
25 in my share of river trips as well. The

1 Chattooga is a precious resource to me.  
2 Those of us who participate in  
3 wilderness activities are consumers. We  
4 are part of the consumption process of  
5 our fleeting wilderness areas. How much  
6 is enough? If each of our primary  
7 groups continue to pressure the areas we  
8 love, we will inevitably create a  
9 complete ruin. Sometimes there's a need  
10 to temper our personal desires so we can  
11 allow the earth a respite. I feel that  
12 more traffic than the traditional use of  
13 the upper Chattooga can only be a  
14 detriment. I personally believe that no  
15 new uses should be undertaken in this  
16 part of the river. It needs to remain a  
17 haven, a tradeoff to other wildlife.  
18 There are many considerations here.  
19 Uses that are now in place might need to  
20 be restricted somewhat. There are  
21 access for boaters, increased traffic  
22 along the corridor, landowner  
23 confrontation and detrimental water  
24 quality issues. I believe these things  
25 outweigh the additional use

1           consideration. I would like to see the  
2           use traffic of this part of the river  
3           remain as it is to avoid any additional  
4           burden to the river and its wildlife.

5           TERRY SEYDEN:

6           Thank you. Speaker number 25.

7           KEVIN MILLER:

8           Hello. My name is Kevin Miller. I live  
9           in the Greenville, South Carolina, area,  
10          and I have spent the past several years  
11          of my life working very closely with the  
12          paddling/angler conservation  
13          organizations in Upstate South Carolina  
14          and around the nation. We have had  
15          tremendous success in linking these two  
16          types of organizations together, both in  
17          promoting awareness of river quality  
18          issues, river access issues, as well as  
19          educating paddlers about what are the  
20          true environmental concerns along  
21          rivers. When I first started  
22          researching this topic I also went down  
23          to the downtown library and found in the  
24          local area a nice document prepared by  
25          the Forest Service in 1971 that I would

1           like to read you excerpts from. In one  
2           of the sections regarding the headwaters  
3           it's stated, "Rafting or some method of  
4           floating is the best method to see this  
5           portion of the river for many of the  
6           pools are ten to 20 feet deep, an  
7           impossible way for hikers and fishermen.  
8           The sheer rock face and vegetation along  
9           the shore line make it extremely  
10          difficult to hike on foot." The  
11          document also states: "To provide this  
12          type of experience for rock access will  
13          be primarily by trail including a new  
14          walk site. It mentions 11 walk sites  
15          including sites in the headwaters.  
16          Development activities during the first  
17          five years were concentrated on making  
18          the river available to the public  
19          through hiking trails and canoe  
20          (inaudible) site construction and  
21          correcting incompatible conditions that  
22          now exist. One goal is for uniform  
23          fishing and hunting regulations for all  
24          three states. And I started to ask a  
25          simple question. Well, perhaps we have

1 regulations for the public in all three  
2 states, but why are we now encouraging  
3 separation of user groups when the  
4 original intent was so clearly to  
5 include paddling and equal opportunities  
6 throughout the entire river corridor?  
7 Perhaps in 1971 the Attorney General  
8 opinion in North Carolina persuaded the  
9 Forest Service to consider differently,  
10 but it wasn't just the '98 Attorney  
11 General opinion that stated differently.  
12 In 1995 the North Carolina Supreme Court  
13 decision said that "Water is valuable  
14 for pleasure boating and must be  
15 regarded as navigable waters that no  
16 water craft has ever put upon it for the  
17 purpose of trade or agriculture." As a  
18 river conservationist and a paddler I  
19 think there are wonderful opportunities  
20 here to join hand in hand to promote  
21 this section of river for better water  
22 quality, for the environment, for  
23 paddling, and for other user groups. I  
24 realize that there are people here that  
25 I've heard say --- some people are

1           concerned about their ability to develop  
2           land in the river corridor. I guess we  
3           even had someone who said he didn't like  
4           democracy, but I see this as a wonderful  
5           opportunity here for us all to stand up  
6           for the environment and to ask the  
7           Forest Service to fulfill its promise it  
8           made over 35 years ago to the American  
9           Public and through congressional  
10          representatives who designated it a wild  
11          and scenic river. Thank you.

12         TERRY SEYDEN:

13                 Speaker number 26, and it will soon be  
14                 27, 28, 29.

15         GREG JOHNSON:

16                 I am fully prepared (inaudible) This  
17                 issue came to mind last night, late in  
18                 the night, at 4 in the morning, and I  
19                 felt that I needed to come in.

20                 (Inaudible) My name is Greg Johnson.  
21                 I'm 37 years old, and I've had a  
22                 kayaking passion (inaudible) So 22 years  
23                 ago when I was in high school, my  
24                 brother and I (inaudible) wood canoeing  
25                 and kayaking. (Inaudible) chain and

1 white water design. My first boat was  
2 also (inaudible) wooden canoe I really  
3 enjoyed working with these guys, and  
4 (inaudible) Over the years I've kept on  
5 paddling, you know, when I can. I moved  
6 to the Catskill Mountains of New York in  
7 1990, and I lived there for 11 years.  
8 The whole time I lived up there I never  
9 managed to get on a river I liked as  
10 much as the Chattooga River. The first  
11 time I went up the Chattooga River was  
12 in 1984, 22 years ago. I had also  
13 skydived, water planing, used to be able  
14 to ride my bike over (inaudible). I  
15 guess what I'm trying to say is that  
16 I've had a lot, my share of being around  
17 a lot of different outlets. It's great  
18 to have and outlet that (inaudible). I  
19 understand what some of the people are  
20 trying to (inaudible) Chattooga River.  
21 It's pristine and beautiful and less  
22 populated. The problem is that the  
23 kayakers are in the minority, and I  
24 would love to go down the Chattooga, but  
25 here's my ultimate dilemma I have to

1 share with you (inaudible) My grandma  
2 said if something was wrong 50 years  
3 ago, it's wrong today, and I really hold  
4 that truth. In this case it's 30 years.  
5 Now when it comes down to (inaudible)  
6 being able to go camping so that I will  
7 not see anyone else, these days it's  
8 very, very, very hard to find a place.  
9 I don't even like to see other hikers,  
10 much less people floating right down the  
11 middle of the river. There is a time  
12 and place for everything. Kayakers  
13 should be more than happy with the  
14 amount of river it already has. And the  
15 fact of the matter kayaks disturb more  
16 people around them than kayaks  
17 (inaudible) That's my opinion, I guess.  
18 And --- and if we have a true democracy  
19 in this on all taxpayers democracy,  
20 there's probably only about five percent  
21 of the Chattooga that's accessible to  
22 white water users (inaudible) So that's  
23 to me, like I said, in my opinion is  
24 outrageous. One guy said --- (bell  
25 rings indicating end of time)

1 TERRY SEYDEN:

2 Okay. Speaker 27.

3 DAVE VAN LEAR:

4 My name is Dave Van Lear. I'm a retired  
5 forestry professor at Clemson  
6 University. I had the opportunity to  
7 research the Chattooga River watershed  
8 in my career, looking at seven sources  
9 to the watershed, and into the river,  
10 and into the watershed. I looked at  
11 large moving debris in some of the  
12 tributaries of the Chattooga, and  
13 looking at brown trout moving in the  
14 Chattooga. I appreciate the opportunity  
15 to make a statement about the management  
16 of the upper Chattooga River. The  
17 Chattooga River, as many have said, is,  
18 indeed, a national treasure. For over  
19 30 years it has been zoned to separate  
20 it from conflicting uses, and from the  
21 perspective of most users, but not the  
22 boaters, this management strategy has  
23 worked exceedingly well. On the river  
24 above the Highway 28 bridge anglers,  
25 hikers, bird watchers, naturalists, and

1 others have the rare opportunity to  
2 enjoy the true back country experience  
3 without interruption from boaters. Or  
4 below the river boaters enjoy the wild  
5 backwater experience without  
6 interference from wading anglers. In my  
7 opinion, it would be foolish for the  
8 Forest Service to change its successful  
9 management strategy that has worked  
10 well. Management of our national forest  
11 over the past 100 years has evolved  
12 through a number of stages from  
13 protection by how the national forests  
14 were acquired, to multiple use in the  
15 '60s, to eco system management in the  
16 '80s and '90s, and the social forest  
17 today. The common denominator for all  
18 these stages is that the influence of  
19 the public has increased with passing  
20 time. While these changes have  
21 generally been beneficial one drawback,  
22 in my opinion, is now that the wheel  
23 that squeaks the loudest gets the  
24 grease. Is this any way to manage a  
25 national treasure like the Chattooga

1 River? It should be inherent values of  
2 a national resource. Its natural  
3 beauty, its biodiversity, its wildness.  
4 The water is protected by the stewards  
5 of the public's resources. Haven't we  
6 learned anything in the decade since  
7 Walt Kelly's cartoon character Pogo,  
8 uttered those immortal words, "We have  
9 met the enemy, and they is us." In  
10 other words, too many of us in the  
11 rather confined, wild, and still pretty  
12 natural corridor of the upper Chattooga  
13 River will ultimately destroy that which  
14 makes it a wild and scenic river. As we  
15 move into the twenty-first century one  
16 thing is certain, the places that one  
17 can go to to enjoy the beauty and  
18 solitude of a relatively large, wild,  
19 and undamaged river in the eastern  
20 United States, whether you're a  
21 fisherman or not, is becoming harder and  
22 harder to find. The upper Chattooga  
23 River is still such a place, and as such  
24 will become even more valuable in the  
25 future. There's not going to be many of

1           them in the future. So let's save the  
2           --- save it to the degree possible by  
3           continuing to manage it responsibly as a  
4           zoned resource for boating and prohibit  
5           it above the Highway 28 bridge. Thank  
6           you.

7           TERRY SEYDEN:

8           Speaker number 28.

9           LARRY WALKER:

10           My name is Larry Walker. I'm originally  
11           from Greenville, South Carolina. I  
12           retired to Macon County, Georgia. I  
13           have forest management degrees from  
14           Clemson University and the University of  
15           Georgia, and I've dedicated most of my  
16           adult life to the management and  
17           conservation of the forest. I'll follow  
18           the format that was provided at the open  
19           house, the questions to consider, and  
20           I'll try to draw my comments to each of  
21           those. I enjoy hiking, fishing,  
22           hunting, and camping in the upper  
23           Chattooga area, and have kayaked and  
24           rapid on the lower sections. I think  
25           the values, the two values, that are

1 related or asked for in the first bullet  
2 of questions to consider in the upper  
3 Chattooga as it is currently zoned is  
4 peace and relative solitude that exists  
5 under the current zone and line the  
6 values up of the wild scenic rivers and  
7 river (inaudible) Point number two, or  
8 question number two, "How would I  
9 manage?" I would manage, if any  
10 management, no horses, no four wheelers,  
11 no mountain bikes, and no boaters.  
12 Number three, benefits environmental,  
13 less sediment, and chemicals from people  
14 in the water. Social, rescue, and I  
15 even had recovery costs would be less  
16 with things that are left as they are.  
17 Recreation benefit, peace. Economic,  
18 environmental, fishing community and its  
19 related economics. As to the  
20 environmental impact would be along the  
21 river, (inaudible) to erosions. As for  
22 changes, I would leave it as it is.  
23 Boaters have dominance over two-thirds  
24 of the river. They have effectively run  
25 off backwater fishermen from the lower

1           (inaudible) of this wonderful river. As  
2           to alternatives, leave it alone.  
3           One-third fish, hike, seek solitude;  
4           two-thirds hoot, holler, splash, and  
5           boating. The last thing allows you to  
6           make comments as to other issues and  
7           comments. I think the decision for the  
8           hypothetical useful capacity study of  
9           the upper section without a parent study  
10          of the existing relationship of the  
11          lower section is flawed. Reality exists  
12          in the lower section, and there's no  
13          need for a follow-up or a model.  
14          Boaters rule the lower two-thirds of the  
15          river. A specific personal --- well,  
16          one other thing that's in the user  
17          capacity report that I think is in  
18          error, it's not a big deal, hunting is  
19          not a major use, but it says there's no  
20          hunting in the spring. There is spring  
21          turkey hunting in both South Carolina  
22          and Georgia and on into the fall, and it  
23          does not address grouse or duck hunting.  
24          Again, I don't think there's a big use  
25          for either of those, but that is an area

1           in the report. On Friday, June 29th I  
2           hiked down to one of the lower sections  
3           of the river with my lab on Watergate  
4           Road in Raven County. I was seeking  
5           peace. I found boaters, not peace and  
6           solitude. If the Forest Service can't  
7           zone boaters out of this section of this  
8           river, then all zoning on all federal  
9           land is in jeopardy. The forest will be  
10          overrun by four wheelers and other noise  
11          polluters. Thank you.

12       TERRY SEYDEN:

13           Okay. Speaker number 29.

14       SHAYNE DAY:

15           Hi, guys. My name is Shayne Day. I  
16           live in Ellijay, Georgia. My experience  
17           on the Chattooga started when I was 15  
18           years old on a day after Christmas. It  
19           was a very cold day. It was a very  
20           beautiful day on Dexter Fork. I loved  
21           the part of the headwater study  
22           (inaudible), and it was a very magical  
23           time. It was a very special (inaudible)  
24           of the river that are very unique.  
25           There are very few rivers that even

1           closely compare to the headwaters. That  
2           being said, you know, the headwaters, it  
3           is a wild and scenic river. It should  
4           be managed for the preservation of the  
5           future. The Forest Service, you know,  
6           as Mark stated, you know, we --- we pay  
7           for you-all. It's our tax dollars.  
8           It's our tax dollars that bought the  
9           land. And everybody, not just anglers,  
10          not fishers, not bird watchers, not  
11          swimmers, everybody. Boating is a wild  
12          and scenic river user compliant  
13          recreational activity. We use the  
14          existing trails. We use the existing  
15          access points. We're not asking for any  
16          parking lots. We're not asking for any  
17          roads to access the river. We will be  
18          accessing at the bridges, and we'll be  
19          carrying down user created trails to  
20          access the river. And we won't be there  
21          after heavy or continuous rainfall. The  
22          existing users, anglers, and hikers, and  
23          bird watchers, and swimmers, they use  
24          the trails that are becoming eroded,  
25          that are causing sediment buildup in the

1 lake. The damage is already done.  
2 There is no way to, you know, go back in  
3 time and reverse it. The argument of  
4 limited boaters, you should limit  
5 everybody, not just us. This  
6 (inaudible) from the past that we've  
7 had, shoot, the river was banned to  
8 boating before I was born. (Inaudible)  
9 past altercations, disturbing the peace,  
10 personal perceptions of what they  
11 invades "solitude." Current problems.  
12 Trails, camps, erosions, and trash,  
13 overuse. Again, limits everybody, not  
14 just boaters. Types of trails that are  
15 used, rain trails, erosion, water  
16 trails. Water running downstream.  
17 Water erodes the rock and woods that we  
18 navigate around. We do not do any type  
19 of damage to the environment when  
20 floating our boats, point of fact.  
21 Safety. People have touched on that.  
22 Safety is not an issue to limit  
23 activities in a wild and scenic river  
24 corridor. Now you said there also is no  
25 exceptional hazards that you found

1 during our study. Exceptional hazards,  
2 there is one man who reported, and I  
3 think it might be mandatory, it may be  
4 wrong, I don't know. We didn't run it  
5 that day. That (inaudible) knowledge  
6 and equipment has also grown  
7 exponentially in the last decade, and  
8 it has since I've been (inaudible)  
9 False concerns. Voters, we're not going  
10 to damage the stream bed. If something  
11 happens, boaters take care of  
12 themselves. If there's a search and  
13 rescue operation, it is often a body  
14 recovery as opposed to a rescue. We  
15 don't try and pull wood out of the  
16 rivers unless it's causing an  
17 exceptional hazard. We do maybe cause  
18 some wildlife interruption, but so do  
19 anglers, so do hikers. And if there's  
20 one person at the bottom of a rapid when  
21 a boater is coming through at a high  
22 enough water level, they probably have a  
23 little bit more to worry about than a  
24 boater running on top of them. Thank  
25 you.

1       TERRY SEYDEN:

2             Speaker number 30.

3       JIM WHITEHURST:

4             My name is Jim Whitehurst. I'm from  
5             Highlands, North Carolina. I have owned  
6             boats, kayaks, canoes for more than 25  
7             years. I know what the white water  
8             thrills is all about, but before you put  
9             me in the wrong category, I'm not here  
10            to reverse the Forest Service ban on the  
11            upper Chattooga. I'm here to compliment  
12            you folks in the Forest Service for the  
13            great job of management that you've done  
14            for the last 30 years. That is a very  
15            pristine and special place on the upper  
16            Chattooga. There are so few of these  
17            pristine special places left that it  
18            would be absolutely a sin to open it up  
19            to boaters. Boaters would cause a lot  
20            more traffic in places where there is no  
21            traffic except for maybe anglers and  
22            waders. There is nature up on the upper  
23            Chattooga that you can't find in any  
24            other places that I know about. There  
25            are herons, there are owls, there are

1           lots of flying creatures. The people  
2           that you folks in the Forest Service  
3           have not heard from are the majority of  
4           users from this section of the river  
5           that we're talking about. You have not  
6           heard from them. Bird watchers. You've  
7           not heard from the photographers.  
8           You've not heard from the people that  
9           live in Atlanta, and Greenville, and are  
10          stressed, and are escaping to a place  
11          that they can find some solitude. These  
12          are the majority of the users. They're  
13          not boaters. They're not anglers.  
14          They're not the --- the hikers that you  
15          heard from. So your reports from your  
16          consultant is going to be flawed because  
17          it has not covered these normal users.  
18          You haven't heard from picnickers and  
19          families that go down to the very  
20          pristine places along this beautiful  
21          riverbank. This is a fantastic treasure  
22          that if it isn't protected now by the  
23          Forest Service, it will be eroded and  
24          polluted for years to come. I represent  
25          the 68 members from a hiking club that's

1           based in Highlands, North Carolina. We  
2           do trail maintenance on these trails  
3           that are in this area. There are some  
4           very special trails along the Chattooga  
5           River that we worked hard to help  
6           maintain. You boaters wouldn't know  
7           anything about that. You don't see it  
8           because you are on the water. I thank  
9           you very much for listening to me. I  
10          hope that the Forest Service is capable  
11          of making the right decision in this  
12          matter. Thank you very much.

13         TERRY SEYDEN:

14                 Number 31.

15         WALTER WINGFIELD:

16                 Thank you. My name is Walter Wingfield,  
17                 and I am a permanent resident of Macon  
18                 County, North Carolina, the headwaters  
19                 of the Chattooga River Forest. I, too,  
20                 represent a group of users who are not  
21                 well organized and whose voice has not  
22                 been heard in an organized way by the  
23                 Forest Service. That is the bird  
24                 watchers, the hikers, and photographers,  
25                 the nature buffs, the swimmers, et

1           cetera. The upper Chattooga is one of  
2           the few remaining pristine wilderness  
3           areas in this country, and it really  
4           needs to stay that way. It is  
5           designated as a wild and scenic river,  
6           and as such it's entitled to maximum  
7           protection from human intrusions. It  
8           was created to preserve wildness,  
9           solitude in nature as it originally  
10          existed in this country, or at least as  
11          closely as we can get to it. It should  
12          not be soiled by boating activity, which  
13          is inevitably going to destroy solitude,  
14          increase trail and road presence, and  
15          leave more trash and litter. Safety is  
16          also, I think, a serious concern for  
17          boating on this section is --- is very  
18          treacherous, and there will --- there  
19          will undoubtedly be injuries and deaths,  
20          and access to perform rescues is really  
21          very limited. There should be some  
22          rivers areas in this country that can be  
23          enjoyed for the nature experience they  
24          provide alone, and this is one of them.  
25          The fact that the upper Chattooga River

1 is one of the few river areas not  
2 accessible to boaters is a strong reason  
3 for not allowing --- for the Forest not  
4 allowing such access now. So we ask you  
5 to uphold the status quo and not allow  
6 any access by boaters of this wonderful  
7 treasure. Thank you.

8 TERRY SEYDEN:

9 Speaker number 32, and 33, and we'll set  
10 the group until 2:45, and see if we are  
11 going to need a short break or not.

12 BILL RETHORST:

13 My name is Bill Rethorst. I'm a  
14 full-time resident of Macon County. I  
15 first visited the Chattooga in 1968 when  
16 I picnicked on the rocks above the Bull  
17 Pen Bridge. It was a magnificent  
18 experience for a flatlander from Miami.  
19 Seeing the pristine, wild, and scenic  
20 and all the adjectives that was used  
21 stretch of nature, and having grown up  
22 in Miami and watched a lot of very  
23 similar adjectives used about nature,  
24 but those spots no longer available  
25 because they've been paved over, or

1 bulldozed over, or flooded, used,  
2 trampled, farmed, whatever. In the  
3 early 1970s I boated with (inaudible) on  
4 the Nantahala. I've done the Gully in  
5 September. It's magnificent. I've been  
6 on the Oconee course. I'm looking  
7 forward to doing some of the new rivers  
8 that have been opened up recently,  
9 Santito over in Robinsville. Those are  
10 exciting times. I've also lived close  
11 enough to an area where I do have access  
12 to put to all areas of the Chattooga,  
13 and I use my well used and plasticized  
14 map of the Chattooga, and I've been on  
15 sections one, and sections two, sections  
16 three, sections four. Then I turn the  
17 map over, and there is some verbiage on  
18 here, "No swimming above Highway 28."  
19 That's half the river, half the map. I  
20 think that's a good thing. Thirty years  
21 ago I sat and enjoyed peace and  
22 solitude. Now I go and do photography.  
23 I lay on my stomach, watch different  
24 wildlife. I walk in. I hear the birds  
25 stop their singing and start their

1 twicking, which means danger, change has  
2 happened. I sit down. It's peaceful.  
3 After the birds perceive the threat is  
4 passed, they begin their singing again.  
5 I think that's important. I took my  
6 daughters along the trails that I walked  
7 on before I had children. I look  
8 forward to taking my grandchildren on  
9 the same trails without the interference  
10 of boaters, of who I am one. I also  
11 look forward to taking my grandchildren  
12 on sections of the river that you can  
13 boat, but I don't want to be here 30  
14 years from now, being older than most of  
15 the boaters in the room, and having my  
16 grandchildren say, "Poppy, why didn't  
17 you keep the boaters off that section of  
18 the river so we can enjoy it out there  
19 peaceful?" Thank you.

20 TERRY SEYDEN:

21 And number 33.

22 BROOKS D. BRYANT:

23 My name is Brooks Bryant, and I'm the  
24 assistant White Waters Director of Camp  
25 Rainey Mountain Boy Scout Camp on

1 Highway 76 on the Blue Ridge side. My  
2 stance on the issue of access rights is  
3 that everyone should be afforded the  
4 opportunity to enjoy the beauty and  
5 power of the Chattooga River. The  
6 boating ban that has been in place for  
7 the past 30 years is absolutely absurd.  
8 It is unfair to restrict a group that is  
9 already limited by flow rates and  
10 rainfall. Boating on the upper sections  
11 will occur at fractions of days that  
12 fishing is deemed prime. The impact of  
13 kayaking is minimal at the most when  
14 compared to other recreational uses. I  
15 think that the Chattooga should be  
16 available for everyone to enjoy in any  
17 manner that they choose. The Chattooga  
18 River holds something special that can  
19 only be described in the eyes of an  
20 individual whose has just been  
21 introduced to the beauty of the truly  
22 wild and scenic river. One day I hope  
23 to boat the upper sections of the river,  
24 and that future generations and packers  
25 like the ten boys that I bought here

1           with me today, will one day be able to  
2           enjoy it for themselves. Thank you.

3       TERRY SEYDEN:

4           Number 34.

5       ANDY HOLLAND:

6           How are you? My name is Andy Holland.  
7           I was born and raised here in this part  
8           of the country. I'm an angler, have  
9           been angling since I was --- could hold  
10          a rod in my hand. I've been coming to  
11          the river for 40 years. I don't think  
12          most of the fishermen that I know and  
13          that I communicate with, we don't have a  
14          problem with a few kayakers, you know.  
15          Maybe some white water, you know,  
16          enthusiasts. I think what we're worried  
17          about is the commercialization of this  
18          river. Once you let one special needs  
19          group in, how are you going to keep  
20          everybody else out? It won't hurt the  
21          white water sets this precedent, if you  
22          can sue the Forest Service and get what  
23          you want, I mean, who is going to be  
24          next in line? I mean, surely you are  
25          going to have horseback riders, you're

1 going to have the ATVs, you're going to  
2 have just one group after the other, I  
3 think, trying to impinge on this  
4 treasure that we --- we call Chattooga  
5 River. You know, years ago I used to  
6 walk up and down that river. I mean,  
7 there's some deep parts in that river,  
8 so why do they want to go kayaking, you  
9 know --- before the public actually got  
10 to the Chattooga. I mean, that's long  
11 gone. That was, you know, that was  
12 years ago. It's completely destroyed.  
13 And that's basically why we're sitting  
14 here is protect it from that kind of  
15 abuse. And, like I said, I don't have a  
16 problem with you kayakers, but to me  
17 it's all about the fish, and it's all  
18 about the environment. I don't want to  
19 see commercialization of that river, and  
20 --- and it's a great natural resource.  
21 And I think it's going to happen. I  
22 mean, regardless, you know, what ---  
23 what's great, we live in the area, and I  
24 just hope the Forest Service maintains  
25 it and continues this ban. I think in

1           the long run, I think that's the only  
2           way the rivers comes back. You know,  
3           there's --- there's several things going  
4           on now, and the fish take a hit every  
5           year. Sedimentation, the drought,  
6           conditions that have been going on. You  
7           know, we're probably going to lose all  
8           the hemlocks in the forest from the  
9           parasite and (inaudible) you know.  
10          That's just going to be another hit that  
11          these fish are going to have to take.  
12          And I realize (inaudible) and, you know,  
13          but the fishery is going to be damaged  
14          if we start letting more and more groups  
15          into this upper section. Like I said, a  
16          few kayakers would be fine, but I wonder  
17          if the kayakers are going to be like  
18          (inaudible) Well, the ATVs are coming,  
19          and the Jeeps, and the loggers. I mean,  
20          I hope the kayakers are going to be  
21          there supporting us, because I don't  
22          think they are. I still think they want  
23          to ride down the river. That's all they  
24          want to do. They can care less if  
25          there's any fish in the water, you know.

1           It just doesn't matter to them, I don't  
2           think. I don't think they realize, you  
3           know, what kind of future it is. Thank  
4           you very much.

5           TERRY SEYDEN:

6           You've been a very attentive audience,  
7           and people have been listening  
8           carefully, and we've been going at it  
9           about an hour and 45 minutes. Maybe we  
10          want to take a quick stretch break here,  
11          five minutes, and we'll reconvene, if  
12          that's okay with the rest that are left  
13          waiting. Thank you. Five minutes, and  
14          then we will reconvene.

15                           **(A short break was taken)**

16          TERRY SEYDEN:

17           Okay. Number 35.

18          MIKE BAMFORD:

19           Okay. Hi. My name is Mike Bamford.  
20           I've been living on the Chattooga  
21           headwaters for the last ten years. I  
22           wanted to talk today kind of in general  
23           about a lot of issues, but I had brought  
24           up at the beginning. But there's one  
25           important I really want to talk about

1           today or at least start with. The  
2           original management plan for the  
3           Chattooga limited many activities on the  
4           river. It limited motorized water  
5           crafts. It --- it limited tubing to a  
6           few zoned areas. It required canoeists  
7           to wear safety gear. It shut down a lot  
8           of access roads. It eliminated --- it  
9           eliminated horse trails above 28, and why  
10          we're here today, it eliminated the white  
11          water boating and restricted it to the  
12          lower two-thirds of the river. Since  
13          then growth of white water activities has  
14          been extraordinary. Based on the U.S.  
15          Forest Service data there were 1,000  
16          trips in 1971. Today there are nearly  
17          80,000 trips per year. That's 80,000  
18          people on the lower Chattooga River every  
19          summer. Angling, which was considered  
20          the most popular activity in 1971,  
21          remains a protected designation value  
22          today, but it has not been enhanced  
23          throughout the river. In fact, the U.S.  
24          Forest Service has allowed the growth in  
25          boating to displace a lot of anglers on

1 the lower river. They allowed the DNR to  
2 stop stocking the lower river for the  
3 benefit of boaters. And --- and that has  
4 kind of relegated the anglers to the  
5 headwater section of the river. Angling,  
6 as well, must be protected by the mandate  
7 for the protected (inaudible) component  
8 with the wild (inaudible) Instead you  
9 really see angling being diminished along  
10 the upper Chattooga River. Boating  
11 restrictions at the Highway 28 have  
12 protected and enhanced all recreational  
13 values from the entire Chattooga.  
14 Boating below and (inaudible) above. The  
15 Chattooga currently off from the right  
16 has recreational opportunities for many  
17 types of visitors. Uniform management  
18 policy that enhances boating at the  
19 expense of others does not result in an  
20 equitable policy for all users. Paddlers  
21 already experience protection on the  
22 lower river from motorized craft. That  
23 is no different than the anglers being  
24 protected from boaters on the North Fork.  
25 Boundary and overall use only appears

1           inequitable to the egocentrics. The  
2           benefit of zoning for conflicting uses  
3           are seen nationwide, and according to the  
4           IR are the most common methods for  
5           dealing with conflicts. Now if you think  
6           back on the policy 30 years ago, and you  
7           kind of spin it around, a simple shift in  
8           what might have happened is really all of  
9           the debate today. You know, what if ---  
10          what if angling, not boating, had been  
11          enhanced on the lower river? The lower  
12          river may be today the mecca of fly  
13          fishing for the kind of use. And that's  
14          it? Let me get to what I mentioned, the  
15          charting and the way this whole analysis  
16          has been done. Everything is focused on  
17          the upper river, and the truth of the  
18          matter is boaters have the ability to go  
19          on the river 100 percent of the time on  
20          two-thirds of the river. This idea that  
21          boaters are only --- of boating can only  
22          use the river 20 percent of the time is  
23          ridiculous. It's two-thirds that are  
24          available to them 100 percent of the  
25          time, and 96 percent of the Chattooga

1            watershed gives them the ability to use  
2            their boats. Only four percent of the  
3            Chattooga watershed is protected from  
4            boating overuse.

5            TERRY SEYDEN:

6            Also, if you have more comments, if you  
7            want to get a written copy ---

8            MIKE SANFORD:

9            I'll send it.

10           TERRY SEYDEN:

11           36.

12           DOUG ADAMS:

13           My name is Doug Adams. I'm an angler.  
14           I live in Rabun Gap, Georgia, and  
15           preparing for this meeting the Forest  
16           Service gave me some questions, one of  
17           which was how will the upper Chattooga  
18           be managed if you were managing it.  
19           First I would address two questions of  
20           concerns. One, the north fork needs  
21           more attention right now from law  
22           enforcement because we're having ever  
23           increasing problems with vehicle  
24           break-ins, theft, drug problems, and so  
25           forth. Another pressing concern is

1 education. We need education efforts  
2 are needed right now to encourage  
3 appropriate recreation behaviors that  
4 minimizes impact on the watershed. In  
5 designing a management strategy I would  
6 keep in mind that the Forest Service  
7 streams are managed to emphasize and  
8 recruit large wooden material. The  
9 report said in these cases user groups  
10 may remove hazardous large wooden  
11 material. Second, I would keep in mind  
12 for a recent three year period, 2003  
13 through 2005, the water gauge read over  
14 1.8 feet 79 percent of the time. By the  
15 report that's boatable water 79 percent  
16 of the time, 862 days in a three year  
17 period. Half the headwaters are already  
18 zoned to accommodate creeking activity,  
19 the west fork watershed. And number  
20 four, lower river boating has displaced  
21 other visitors wishing to avoid  
22 conflicts and interference while seeking  
23 solitude and quietness. And five, the  
24 report said the Chattooga recreation is  
25 likely to increase in excess of 20

1           percent in the next decade, and white  
2           water boating and fly fishing, the  
3           report said, may increase at even higher  
4           --- even higher rates. I'm going to  
5           briefly quote from the report. "Agency  
6           staff use professional judgment to  
7           determine which characteristics are  
8           unique, rare, exemplary at a regional or  
9           a national scale so as to qualify as  
10          outstandingly remarkable." The North  
11          Fork issue here, it has the local and  
12          regional values. There's nowhere else  
13          anglers can go in peace that has the  
14          size of quality fly fishing, and the  
15          spectacular back country setting, that  
16          extreme boating interference. Because  
17          of the unique back country experience in  
18          1999 the North Fork was named one of the  
19          100 best trout streams in the nation.  
20          The --- the preparation said how would  
21          you manage, and I would manage the  
22          Chattooga to protect and enhance the  
23          ORDs. I would establish limits of  
24          acceptable change, which we're doing,  
25          but I would do it on all segments of the

1 Chattooga, including the West Fork  
2 headquarters, to ensure that the wild  
3 section will remain unimpaired for  
4 future use as enduring back country  
5 wildness, wilderness, remoteness, and  
6 solitude of that intact for entire  
7 future generations. In closing, some  
8 people are saying that zoning of  
9 activities is discrimination. Zoning of  
10 conflicting activities is good  
11 stewardship, not discrimination.  
12 Stewardship encompasses far more than  
13 picking up litter, and it includes the  
14 protection of aesthetic values, of  
15 natural resources such as remoteness and  
16 wildness, regard property or the rights  
17 to boats, to solitude, and the  
18 responsibility of preserving these  
19 values intact for future generations.  
20 Thank you.

21 TERRY SEYDEN:

22 Number 37.

23 MICHELLE MCKENZIE:

24 My name is Michelle MCKENZIE. I live in  
25 Greenville, and I'm probably somewhere

1           around the Chattooga more weekends than  
2           not in the summer, whether it's hiking  
3           or paddling. I do both. I'd first like  
4           to thank all of you Forest Service for  
5           continuing the study, for opening the  
6           dialogue between all the user groups,  
7           and for asking our assistance in helping  
8           to better manage this area. Beginning  
9           to rehash the existing manual as well  
10          and final management plan that is fair  
11          for all users, all the people here, all  
12          of you, share the interest of wanting to  
13          protect this area, wanting to use it.  
14          Most of us should agree that protecting  
15          the area should be the main goal, all of  
16          the area, including the area that Brian  
17          Jacobson mentioned earlier. There is no  
18          legal data, none, that supports  
19          continuing the boater ban on the upper  
20          Chattooga. There is no data that  
21          suggests that boaters would do more  
22          harm. There is data that says that  
23          there is damage there currently. Damage  
24          caused by overuse groups. That data has  
25          been collected from (inaudible) groups.

1           It's been collected from the public.  
2           Boaters much be allowed access to this  
3           stretch. God created it for all of us,  
4           however, all users must be limited  
5           equally to better protect the area than  
6           is currently being done. We would all  
7           be better served to work together to  
8           continue to protect this resource and  
9           hopefully improve it. Thank you.

10       TERRY SEYDEN:

11           Number 38, and I think 39 and 40.

12       JASON MCVEY:

13           Thank you. My name is Jason McVey. I  
14           would like to say I'm not affiliated or  
15           here speaking for anybody. This is just  
16           for me, and my family, my children. I'm  
17           going to tell you about my experience  
18           and what I feel and think. All right?  
19           I'm a frequent user of the upper  
20           Chattooga River. Me and my family  
21           probably go there ten, 15 times a year.  
22           I don't take them every time. They  
23           probably come up three or four times a  
24           year. We often hike in, and I let my  
25           children play in some of the pools and

1 deep holes so they can have fun. I  
2 would like to tell you this is above  
3 Burrells Ford. It's not the most  
4 convenient place for me to take my  
5 family. I only live two miles away from  
6 the Chattooga above the water gauge. I  
7 had a bad experience taking my children  
8 down there hiking behind the Woodsbury  
9 Church, and I had some bad experience  
10 with some paddlers. I would like to go  
11 ahead and say right now I'd give them  
12 five percent (inaudible) Five percent of  
13 the people --- five percent in the  
14 anglers world, five percent hikers. I  
15 just had a run-in with that five percent  
16 that day, but we don't go there no more.  
17 I drive 45 minutes away from my house to  
18 take my children out to this wilderness  
19 experience. I like to show them trees.  
20 I like to show them animal tracks. I  
21 bet --- you know, my --- my daughter's  
22 probably caught as many fish as I have  
23 in the last few years. I'm not against  
24 anybody. I'm just telling you my  
25 personal experiences. I know there have

1           been other instances like that. I've  
2           had friends tell me about them, and  
3           they're not every day. I don't want you  
4           to think it's everyday we're evil to  
5           each other. We're not. Most people are  
6           good, but --- but it does happen, and it  
7           concerns me enough that I don't take my  
8           family down to the water gauge anymore.  
9           I would also like to say that I  
10          personally waded and hiked from 28  
11          Bridge all the way up to Ellicott Rock,  
12          and there's several ways in there that I  
13          think, you know, I'm not an expert  
14          kayaker, I think they're very dangerous,  
15          and I'm sure there are expert kayakers  
16          who could manage them very well. How  
17          are you going to limit the expert  
18          kayakers? Are the others more as an  
19          expert? Are they going to forage, and  
20          if so, how are they going to get around  
21          these obstacles? Most --- most of what  
22          I call rugged terrain, bigger falls,  
23          bigger, you know, what I think is  
24          dangerous, are steep mountain sides,  
25          rock faces, covered in Rhododendron. To

1 get through there when I go fishing I'm  
2 on my hands and knees and getting caught  
3 on my backpack. I don't understand how  
4 we can get a kayak through there. Are  
5 we going to cut trails? If so, is that  
6 in line with the scenic and wildlife  
7 management program? I'm --- I'm not up  
8 on all the rules and --- and things like  
9 liability part. You know, this is just  
10 me. I'm also, again, I'm not trying to  
11 do any scare tactics, but I --- I worked  
12 as a volunteer fire fighter and a paid  
13 fire fighter down in Atlanta, and these  
14 rescue situations I know paddlers take  
15 care of a lot themselves, but I had an  
16 opportunity to carry people out a mile  
17 and a half two miles on a backboard  
18 where --- (bell goes off indicating end  
19 of his time) Darn. But anyway, it's  
20 tough, and I want to know what kind of  
21 access we're going to get in and out of  
22 there. I remember the girl was stuck in  
23 the river. You know, are we going to be  
24 able to dam up the river to get bodies  
25 out? Yeah, those kind of things happen.

1           These are some of the concerns I've got,  
2           and --- but I'm going to hand it in, and  
3           I thank you-all for your time.

4           TERRY SEYDEN:

5           Okay. Speaker 39.

6           BUCK B. DENTON:

7           Thank you. My name is Buck Denton. I'm  
8           the past president of Mountain Bridge  
9           Chapter Trout Unlimited. It goes  
10          without saying that our membership like  
11          that of the Forest Service is to have  
12          the status quo remain the status quo.  
13          We think that that's served the river  
14          and users of the river for the past 30  
15          years. Also, I would like to submit a  
16          petition with over 250 names of  
17          concerned citizens. Most of them are  
18          probably anglers, but other citizens as  
19          well. And I'll give that to them. We  
20          support, and it's in this petition, we  
21          support the Friends of the Public  
22          Chattooga, and we're in opposition of  
23          opening the Chattooga River above the  
24          Highway Bridge to any kind of flow, any  
25          kind of flow any time. It should remain

1 a wild river for the fishermen,  
2 paddlers, bird watchers, cliff hangers,  
3 swimmers, anybody else. It's been  
4 pointed many times, but two-thirds of  
5 the river is used by the boaters, and  
6 that will be quite sufficient. We  
7 really request that you consider this in  
8 the petition and ask that the river stay  
9 a natural, wild, quiet, serene, solitude  
10 place, and it's not only fishermen, but  
11 do all the other things. Thank you.

12 TERRY SEYDEN:

13 Speaker number 40.

14 TED SNYDER:

15 My name is Ted Snyder. I live here in  
16 Walhalla, and have for many, many years.  
17 There are those of us down here who were  
18 instrumental in the designation of the  
19 Chattooga as a wild and scenic river.  
20 We saw this protection price intrinsic  
21 values. We believe a free flowing  
22 river, unrestrained, running through a  
23 primitive corridor was something good in  
24 itself, whether it was used by people  
25 was immaterial. What was important was

1           that we were saving a natural treasure  
2           for all time. I speak with something of  
3           a sense of history about the designation  
4           process. During that time I was the  
5           spokesman for the Sierra Club and  
6           testified before Congress in favor of  
7           its wild and scenic river designation.  
8           The approach of the Forest Service has  
9           not valued the intrinsic good of a wild  
10          river. Instead it has focused on the  
11          "use," use in quotes of the river. Its  
12          approach emphasizes taming the river,  
13          subjecting the wilderness which belongs  
14          to it, to the river, to the pleasures of  
15          --- of humans who in a physical sense  
16          can extract something from it. The laws  
17          in the State testified by Doug  
18          (inaudible) are completed and run  
19          throughout it. He didn't talk to many  
20          different kinds of users. More  
21          important, he failed to study the  
22          Congressional testimony, which is there  
23          for him to go back and look at to see  
24          what people wanted when they wanted it  
25          to become wild and scenic. That brings

1 me a great deal of sadness because of  
2 the real conflict, which he completely  
3 ignored, was the fact that the contract  
4 --- conflict is between leaving the  
5 river alone and letting it be as it is,  
6 and trying to use it and extract some  
7 personal pleasure from it. And that  
8 brings me to the people who want to  
9 kayak up there. They are the epitome of  
10 (inaudible) They want to prove to  
11 themselves what brave, big, tough  
12 fellows they are. They have no interest  
13 in stopping and smelling the flowers,  
14 and that's what we want to do. We have  
15 heard the search and rescue people tell  
16 us how much damage they will do to  
17 rescue one, but will the boaters assure  
18 us that they never have heart attacks,  
19 they never have strokes, they never fall  
20 out of their boats and break a leg, and  
21 they'll never need any kind of rescue  
22 because they're perfect, and they can  
23 get the maximum enjoyment out of their  
24 selfishness? No. I tell you, ladies  
25 and gentlemen, anybody can take a clock

1           apart, very few can put it back  
2           together.

3       TERRY SEYDEN:

4           Speaker number 41. Okay. And so 42,  
5           43, 44, is going to come sit up in the  
6           chairs over here, and we will help move  
7           things along. Thank you, sir.

8       LUTHER LYLE:

9           Okay. I'm Luther Lyle from Oconee  
10          County. I'm not a kayaker, and I'm not  
11          a fisherman, and I can see both sides of  
12          this. But first of all, I would like to  
13          thank the kayakers for what they do on  
14          the river and become (inaudible) and  
15          especially I would like to thank you for  
16          retrieving the Cherokee canoe that was  
17          found there a few years ago and helping  
18          replace it in the Heritage Center. I am  
19          on the Board of Directors of the  
20          Heritage Center, so that's a little  
21          personal thing there. But one thing in  
22          listening to all the speakers who came  
23          before me, several things came out. One  
24          in particular was that the kayakers said  
25          that there are --- the trails that are

1           being used are already damaged in the  
2           area, and there's already erosion. So  
3           why not let them use the trails? To me,  
4           that's not very rational, but I can't  
5           see how more use would benefit us or  
6           benefit the river. In my way of  
7           thinking, and I'm --- I'm just a country  
8           boy --- once the damage is done, it's  
9           done, and you can't retrieve the  
10          wilderness. Like Ted Snyder said, you  
11          can take a clock apart, but you can't  
12          put it back together. Well, once the  
13          wilderness is gone, it's gone. I want  
14          something here for my kids and their  
15          kids. My son is a kayaker, and he is  
16          opposed to the public using the upper  
17          stretches of the Chattooga. And when he  
18          was a kid we used to go hiking and  
19          camping, and he would ask me, I remember  
20          when he was a little kid, he said,  
21          "Daddy, what was it like 200 years ago?"  
22          There aren't a whole lot of places you  
23          can go in Oconee County to get that  
24          experience of what it was like when the  
25          Cherokee were here. The --- the head

1           waters of the Chattooga is one place,  
2           and I would like to see it that way, not  
3           just for my kids but for their kids and  
4           on down. Thank you.

5           TERRY SEYDEN:

6           Number 42, would you go ahead.

7           GEORGE POLK:

8           Thank you. My name is George Polk. I've  
9           lived in Oconee County for thirty years.  
10          My name is George Polk. I've lived in  
11          Oconee County for thirty years, and the  
12          Forest Service knows who I am and  
13          (inaudible) knows who I am, and Clemson  
14          University Forest (inaudible) knows who  
15          I am. I've been a long time spokesman  
16          for the preservation of natural areas in  
17          this wonderful area. Ted Snyder took me  
18          up to Rock Gorge at least twice, and if  
19          any of you have ever done that, if  
20          you've ever been to Rock Gorge,  
21          (inaudible) you know that you're going  
22          to get down to meet the wildness at that  
23          time. On a larger scale, the recent  
24          interview by Bill Moyers, Edmund Wilson,  
25          the noted conservationist, writer,

1 scientist, has stated that the earth,  
2 the whole planet, is in trouble with  
3 losing our natural wildness  
4 preservation, and I think that this is  
5 one of the things that we all need to  
6 think about it. In this interview with  
7 Bill Moyers, Edmund Wilson was stating  
8 the fact that while there are many  
9 things we can't do, there are a lot of  
10 things we can do. Some of the things we  
11 can do are preserving the local areas  
12 and natural wildness, and for some  
13 reason or another that still persists.  
14 These hearings are on treasures that  
15 they're going to have the future of our  
16 planet in their hands. Now, of course,  
17 we cannot, "we" cannot compete on the  
18 par with the Amazon Basin, or the  
19 Brazilian Atlantic coast, or parts of  
20 Central America. But we're --- we're an  
21 area of generous rainfall and various  
22 topography, and we have --- all of us  
23 know that we have animals and plants  
24 that --- that exist no place else in the  
25 world by themselves. I would like to be

1           on record as stating that I think that  
2           this area of the upper Chattooga River  
3           should be preserved in its wildest,  
4           natural state, and remain untraveled by  
5           man as long as possible. Thank you.

6           TERRY SEYDEN:

7           Okay. 43.

8           M. A. WATSON, JR.:

9           My name is Alec Watson, and I live in  
10          Atlanta, Georgia. My family has also  
11          owned property in Macon County for the  
12          last 40 years. I'm almost 61, and for  
13          55 of those years I've fished in the  
14          Chattooga East Fork, all the tributaries  
15          around in North Georgia, South Carolina,  
16          and in North Carolina. I've got five  
17          pages of comments here, which I won't  
18          have time to go over. Some of the  
19          topics that were discussed is cost,  
20          process, what does American White Water  
21          want, alternatives for boaters, and  
22          administrative micromanagement  
23          (inaudible) and a bottom line dealing  
24          with a culture which deals with  
25          fishermen and white water boaters. So

1           if we've got time I just want to read  
2           two sections to it. First of all, I'm  
3           adamantly opposed to opening the  
4           Chattooga to boaters, (inaudible) to  
5           boating. One topic is for the American  
6           White Water (inaudible) some comments  
7           heard during an expert angler and boater  
8           panel information (inaudible) I was only  
9           an expert in (inaudible) it was evident  
10          the participants were skilled white  
11          water boaters in both (inaudible) want  
12          to be able to boat the Chattooga from  
13          the Highway 28 bridge. Especially those  
14          sections which have the most challenging  
15          white water. However, they would also  
16          like to restrict damages, whether they  
17          be float tubes, rafts, (inaudible) or  
18          rubber duck, whatever, because they will  
19          represent both the hazards to white  
20          water kayak racing down swift water and  
21          probable hazard to themselves if they  
22          get into such white water. Like  
23          fisherman, hikers, bird watchers, they  
24          also understand that the wilderness  
25          experience, this is so great, when you

1           come around the bend to the flotilla of  
2           pink and yellow inner tubes. How hard  
3           is it for them to understand that a  
4           flotilla like 70 per day between  
5           Ellicott Rock and Burrells Ford,  
6           according to the study projections 70  
7           per day white --- white water kayakers  
8           coming to a wild breem and trout water  
9           ruins boater users' wilderness  
10          experience, not to mention the  
11          fishermen's fishing success. So what  
12          they really want, they really want is  
13          all everywhere in the nation. The other  
14          thing I want to read is just kind of my  
15          characterization living in Atlanta of  
16          what you're faced with with anglers.  
17          Most trout fishermen, especially those  
18          living part on the Chattooga, don't  
19          check water gauges to determine when  
20          fishing the Chattooga. They might check  
21          the weather report, clothes, but mostly  
22          they decide to fish the Chattooga by  
23          when they can get off work and family  
24          responsibilities. Even --- even if you  
25          live in above Fulton County it will take

1 a long time to get to the river and a  
2 good fishing and wilderness experience.  
3 So time is almost up. My main point is  
4 this: We want --- we want this  
5 experience. We --- we like to get away  
6 from not only, you know, dogs, or noisy  
7 (inaudible) or --- or we want to get  
8 away from fishermen and the crowd up  
9 next to them. We can do that. Even at  
10 my age I can walk two miles into the  
11 Chattooga and get away from it, but you  
12 can't get away from the boaters. That's  
13 about all I can say. Thank you.

14 TERRY SEYDEN:

15 Speaker number 44.

16 KELSEY KINSER:

17 Hi. My name is Kelsey Kinser, and I  
18 believe we should lift the ban on  
19 boating above the Highway 28 bridge. My  
20 father has worked countless hours on  
21 this, but I (inaudible) First of all, we  
22 are not taking away land from the  
23 boaters --- or the anglers. The  
24 anglers. We don't believe (inaudible)  
25 No land will be lost by overturning this

1 illegal act. If you are worried about  
2 boaters, don't be. I grew up around  
3 them. They are honest, humble, fun  
4 loving people who love and respect  
5 nature and would do nothing to alter the  
6 wilderness they have been given.  
7 Boaters are smart, and they know their  
8 limits. They do not raft or paddle on a  
9 section in which they could not handle.  
10 As a (inaudible) I am appalled at the  
11 injustice that has been perpetrated here  
12 (inaudible) for over 20 years. As an  
13 American citizen I expect more. I feel  
14 it would boost up the future of this  
15 area as well as the future of kayaking  
16 and canoeing. I am the future. I grew  
17 up on this river. I want my baby, and I  
18 want to take my children down the entire  
19 unobstructed river and enjoy it, too.  
20 Thank you so much for your time. Thank  
21 you. Bye.

22 TERRY SEYDEN:

23 Okay. 45.

24 MAX KINSER:

25 The reason I came up here today is

1           because people have been talking about  
2           the future generation. Well, I am the  
3           future generation. I am a kayaker, and  
4           I love the Chattooga. I swim and kayak  
5           in it a lot. I swim in Bull Sluice, and  
6           I never even come close to being run  
7           over by any type of craft. I would  
8           never do anything to hurt this beautiful  
9           river. It saddens me to walk along the  
10          upper bank stretches of this pristine  
11          river and find lots and lots of  
12          fishermen having refuse. Having hiked  
13          along the upper Chattooga and hearing a  
14          lot about it from my father, who had the  
15          pleasure and honor to legally boat the  
16          whole of the Chattooga, I can honestly  
17          say it's a beautiful and pristine place.  
18          In my time I have seen some very amazing  
19          things, wildlife, and beautiful scenery.  
20          It's also taken me places I could not  
21          get to otherwise. Some people think  
22          that kayakers are ruining nature. I  
23          think that couldn't be farther from the  
24          truth. We love and want to protect it.  
25          That is why we should open it to

1 boating. This is why we should open the  
2 upper stretches of the Chattooga to  
3 boating. The ban on boating is unfair  
4 and illegal and should be changed.

5 TERRY SEYDEN:

6 Okay. Somebody number 46. Okay. 46?  
7 Okay.

8 BILL JOHNSON:

9 I guess it's fair that I follow  
10 (inaudible) some of you older  
11 (inaudible) I've had to raise Georgia  
12 children and have to teach them  
13 (inaudible) living in the wild having  
14 good safety practice. I moved to  
15 Greenville, South Carolina, from Atlanta  
16 back in '82. And I started fishing on  
17 the Chattooga as well as Lake Jocassee  
18 in '72 after a friend that I started to  
19 work with, George Powell, we both  
20 graduated at the same time and started  
21 to work the same day, as I recall. And  
22 he introduced me to both of those  
23 locations, and it took me ten years  
24 without him (inaudible) up here to get  
25 close to the both of them. I hate to

1 admit I've seen a lot of degradation  
2 happen to the system since I've moved  
3 here. Unfortunately, Lake Lanier, for  
4 up in Atlanta, used to be the number one  
5 trout fishing lake on the east coast. A  
6 lot of people didn't know that. And,  
7 you know, we stocked them, they couldn't  
8 --- they couldn't grow. They didn't  
9 hatch. They didn't have the rivers to  
10 go up and leave the eggs. Two, two and  
11 a half years ago I think it was Georgia  
12 State had a fishing issue, declared the  
13 lake dead of trout, Sea-Doos spilling  
14 gas directly into the water. I have a  
15 boat that I keep in dry storage up at  
16 Jocassee, and the last seven years the  
17 lake has just completely changed. And I  
18 can't get any serenity up there anymore.  
19 There's Sea-Doos left and right, and  
20 there are people making money to destroy  
21 the trout fishing haven that's up there.  
22 It's made up of the trout fishers.  
23 That's going to change. Trust me. It  
24 will change. (inaudible you're going to  
25 have the same report in the next ten or

1           15 years. We can't keep stocking it  
2           because we can't keep them alive. It  
3           will happen. It will happen. I brought  
4           up five children. For their sixth  
5           birthday I introduce them to backpacking  
6           on the Chattooga River. It's their  
7           number one trip, and I think they will  
8           always say that I could not have bought  
9           them anything that taught them as much  
10          as being up there in the serenity. It's  
11          going to go away if we let this happen.  
12          It's going to go away. I got real  
13          interested when I read the article in  
14          the Greenville paper last week. It was  
15          a picture. Even my 13-year-old son, the  
16          first thing he does he said, "Did you  
17          notice that picture?" I said, "Well,  
18          sure. Why?" Held it up for me to look  
19          at. He said, "Well, that kayaker just  
20          went right under that trout fisherman's  
21          line. I've had that happen every time I  
22          put a lure in a boat, every time I try  
23          to fish. Everywhere. Now I know it's  
24          not every one of them, but if you fish,  
25          you will have it happen to you. It's

1           always the boaters. The boater can come  
2           down the river in total enjoyment.  
3           Trout fisherman goes to get away. One  
4           boat comes by and ruins his experience.  
5           I've saved a lot of money not having to  
6           pay a psychiatrist by going to the  
7           Chattooga River and being by myself. I  
8           feel expenses coming if we let this  
9           happen.

10          TERRY SEYDEN:

11                Is 47 here?

12          UNKNOWN:

13                No, she's not.

14          UNKNOWN:

15                No.

16          TERRY SEYDEN:

17                Okay. So 48 now.

18          LEE HODGES:

19                Hi. I'm Lee Hodges from Highlands,  
20                North Carolina. I want to say thank you  
21                to the Forest Service for letting people  
22                come and speak their minds in all the  
23                things that are a part of this hearing.  
24                I think it's important we all vent on  
25                this situation, and hopefully something

1 good will come out of it. Of course,  
2 what I would like to see come out of it  
3 is to continue this ban on the upper  
4 Chattooga River. When my son was just a  
5 baby I would take him to the big rocks  
6 there by the Bull Pen Bridge, and we  
7 would picnic, and it was just so --- so  
8 nice, and calm, and ever since then  
9 we've been hiking up and down that  
10 Chattooga trail, and we've gone to all  
11 different places up there. And I don't  
12 think he would like to see it open to  
13 boaters right now. The Indians knew  
14 what they were talking about, and  
15 certainly about conservation, when they  
16 said, you know, think of the seventh  
17 generation, not just the next  
18 generation. If we offend this pristine  
19 part of this river now, I mean, what's  
20 going to come next. We have to think  
21 about what other special interests will  
22 come up after this and demand to use  
23 that part of the river. The few days  
24 that the boaters can use it equals high  
25 impact. That means that the few days

1           that they're going to be coming down  
2           there like flies basically, and it's  
3           going to have a huge high impact in that  
4           regard. It's user trails that's talked  
5           about. Well, you know, does that mean  
6           create horse trails wherever they feel  
7           the easiest way to get their boat to the  
8           river? I mean, who is going to police  
9           this? Who is going to manage it and ---  
10          and what the permits, and fines, and  
11          oversee it. The Forest Service  
12          certainly doesn't have it in its budget.  
13          They already closed the Highlands Forest  
14          Service office, which we were sorry to  
15          see go. So I just don't see how this is  
16          going to benefit the Forest Service, or  
17          anyone, for that matter. I --- I think  
18          everyone right now does get to use the  
19          river, just not certain sections, or  
20          just not usable for boating. Because of  
21          that then it is difficult to navigate  
22          it's so shallow. So I think with good  
23          foresight you should keep these certain  
24          areas closed and should remain closed so  
25          that the second generation can see how

1           we're seeing it today. Thank you.

2           TERRY SEYDEN:

3           Can we have 49 next?

4           ROGER NUTT:

5           Hi. My name is Roger Nutt. I'm from  
6           Gainesville. I'm a paddler and a  
7           brother of an avid fisherman and a  
8           fishing magazine editor, and my best  
9           (inaudible) buddy also fishes. He tells  
10          me that the fishing on the lower  
11          Chattooga is great. Biggest brown trout  
12          he ever caught I think was 22 inches he  
13          caught like 100 yards below the foot end  
14          of section two on --- right under his  
15          canoe. He pulls a lot of fish because  
16          Mike's the type that for some reason the  
17          lower river is not being stocked  
18          anymore. I did have the privilege of  
19          paddling the river when it was legal in  
20          '76. We did (inaudible) Falls on rocks  
21          and we pushed it over a tree one time,  
22          and this was in a 16 foot open canoe  
23          that's --- that's very --- the  
24          (inaudible) and the river was closed  
25          when we went to the Forest Service

1 people home back in the --- the mid '70s  
2 because of --- of danger. A lot of  
3 people didn't know what they were doing  
4 coming down the river. They were  
5 walking out in the middle of the night  
6 waking the Ranger up in the middle of  
7 the night. It might have made sense to  
8 protect the people back then, but in the  
9 last 20 years there's no reason for  
10 closing the river. If paddlers could  
11 paddle the river for 20 years, none of  
12 these folks here would be here now.  
13 They all realized --- everybody is here,  
14 too, because they love the river,  
15 paddlers and the nonpaddlers, and want  
16 to protect it. There's no group that  
17 wants to protect the river more than  
18 paddlers. There's no group that has  
19 less impact upon the river than  
20 paddlers. If you just don't like to see  
21 the boater, you know, you have two  
22 choices, you know. Just --- just a few  
23 hours, about three hours a day, 20  
24 percent of the days that there might be  
25 boaters coming down. You can go to

1 Burrell's Ford fishing till 1:00, and  
2 then move to Grimshawes Bridge and spend  
3 the rest of the day you will never see a  
4 boater. You've got about a three hour  
5 window, and --- but we will see a lot of  
6 fisherman become boaters because fishing  
7 --- boating access is the best way to  
8 get to the --- the wonderful fishing  
9 holes on this section. When we paddled  
10 it we saw a horde of fishermen within a  
11 quarter mile of Burrell's Ford. None  
12 after that. They can't get there. The  
13 way the regional scenic river study  
14 indicated the best way to see the river  
15 is with a boat. You can go from  
16 Ellicott Rock to Burrell's Ford in less  
17 than an hour, no (inaudible) The --- the  
18 group there didn't board it once in that  
19 section. It made no impact on --- on  
20 --- on the river. But the boaters will  
21 have an impact. They will be joining  
22 you in wanting to make sure that there's  
23 no logging. They'll be --- they'll be  
24 fighting any erosion. You know, "We'll  
25 be your best friend. The only reason

1           that you fear us is because of the fear  
2           of the unknown." The best way to  
3           proceed now is to allow boating.  
4           There's not going to be 70 people per  
5           day. You know, it will probably be less  
6           than ten a day in that section, and  
7           better for everybody to work together.  
8           Thanks to everybody for coming.

9           TERRY SEYDEN:

10           Number 50.

11           ROYCE HUGHES:

12           Thank you. I'm Royce Hughes. I'm from  
13           Ellijay, Georgia. I've been here about  
14           five years. Prior to that I spent my  
15           entire life on Lake Lanier about three  
16           miles from the dam. I preceded Lake  
17           Lanier, and so I know what's happened  
18           there. I've had opportunity to paddle  
19           sections of the Chattooga. It was a  
20           unique experience. I'm a boater, but my  
21           first priority is to protect the river.  
22           For about 15 years of my life I was an  
23           open boat instructor. Boaters are  
24           environmentalists. They care about the  
25           river. They take trash from the river.

1           They leave very little sign of being  
2           there. You may see some marks in the  
3           sand for them to put in and to take out  
4           where they slid their boat in. And I  
5           confess, I left a little drink from my  
6           boat on a rock or two in the river in my  
7           time, but my impact on the rivers that I  
8           have paddled, not only in the Southeast  
9           but across this great country has been  
10          very minimal. On the other hand, I have  
11          seen the impact of uncontrolled  
12          development. That's the issue.  
13          Uncontrolled development where builders  
14          --- and I'm not knocking builders, it  
15          --- it has to do with people not being  
16          aware of or concerned about their  
17          environment. For me the issue is that  
18          we need ultimately to educate, not  
19          legislate, so obviously, I would like to  
20          see the ban lifted on boating. I don't  
21          think that is the detriment to the  
22          river. The detriment is going to be  
23          uncontrolled development as the areas  
24          between Atlanta and Greenville become  
25          one massive suburb. Thank you.

1 TERRY SEYDEN:

2 51.

3 BUTCH CLAY:

4 My name is Butch Clay, and I live at  
5 Mountain Rest. I worked on the  
6 Chattooga for 14 1/2 years, 15 first as  
7 a guide, then as a kayaking  
8 photographer. Currently I'm a teacher  
9 at Cherokee Creek Boys School. I have a  
10 lot of respect for boaters, and I don't  
11 think there's any question that that  
12 section of the river would ever be put  
13 in danger in terms of damage to or trash  
14 on the river. If it's in good hands  
15 with anybody, it's in good hands with  
16 the boaters and the fishermen as far as  
17 I'm concerned. Nevertheless, I think  
18 here is a case where inaudible in water,  
19 and on that basis I oppose the amend to  
20 open up the headwaters. I want the  
21 status quo to be maintained. I would  
22 explain it this way. I have a son three  
23 years old. I have no doubt when he gets  
24 older he will want to paddle and kayak,  
25 and I have no doubt it will be up on

1 overflow. I support that, and I'll  
2 protect your right to paddle that  
3 stretch of river as --- as quickly as I  
4 will protect the right of the fishermen  
5 to have that stretch on the North Fork  
6 to themselves. Zoning is a valid,  
7 legal, legitimate way to apportion uses  
8 on a river that is a finite resource. I  
9 want my son to have that kind of wild  
10 and scenic experience, paddling that  
11 stretch of river. Learning that way to  
12 measure himself against that wilderness.  
13 But there's another kind of wilderness  
14 experience, and that's the stretch ---  
15 that's the kind of experience that is  
16 currently still available above Highway  
17 28. It's fleeting. It's increasingly  
18 hard to find in this day and age, so I  
19 want him to have that experience also.  
20 I have a friend of mine who is a  
21 paddler, one of the best I've ever seen.  
22 I saw him paddle section four at nine  
23 feet. He described the overflow as his  
24 church, and I respect that. To me the  
25 North Fork is a kind of church to me. I

1 walk in. There's a reasonable assurance  
2 that anybody who is in there is going to  
3 earn that same experience by walking in,  
4 and with all due respect, the  
5 (inaudible) psychology of boaters  
6 against fishermen, boaters I have  
7 nothing against you, but that stretch of  
8 river is open to you. The only thing I  
9 ask you to do is leave your boat behind  
10 and walk in. Lastly, in terms of what I  
11 would like to see for management for  
12 that river. I would like to speak a  
13 quick voice for those who have no voice  
14 in that. The wildlife, they're  
15 increasingly pressed all over the  
16 Southeast. Who is speaking for them?  
17 The Forest Service has not done the  
18 appropriate studies to understand the  
19 long-term direct and indirect effects on  
20 the wildlife of that area. And, lastly,  
21 I would like to speak with voice for  
22 those who are yet unborn. Future  
23 generations who deserve, I think, a  
24 chance to see a truly wild Chatooga.  
25 It's something, but it will go away

1           unless you guys uphold the status quo.

2           Thank you for your time.

3       TERRY SEYDEN:

4           52.

5       TRUMAN NICHOLSON:

6           My name is Truman Nicholson. My family  
7           originally settled that part of the  
8           river before most of this country was  
9           established in the late 1700s and  
10          through the 1800s, and today --- I used  
11          to think years ago that boy, I sure  
12          would like for my family to still own  
13          that strip of river. I could go up and  
14          down the river when I wanted to. You  
15          know what? (inaudible) And (inaudible)  
16          will be so many houses and development  
17          up and down that strip of river, none of  
18          us will be able to enjoy it like we do  
19          today. The Forest Service has a hard  
20          time managing what its already got.  
21          There's numerous picnic shelters up and  
22          down the highways that was developed by  
23          the CCCs. They are not being  
24          maintained. Numerous gravel roads that  
25          leads to some major (inaudible) road,

1 trees down that's been there for months.  
2 People driving across and tearing their  
3 vehicles up and tearing the trees up.  
4 So (inaudible) this section of the river  
5 (inaudible) they're adding more work  
6 load to what they've already got. Are  
7 they going to be able to manage it? I  
8 don't know. But I do know that trout  
9 fishing brings millions of dollars of  
10 money into this state every year. How  
11 much money will rafting, or boating, as  
12 it's called, bring in addition to what  
13 it's already bringing into the state for  
14 opening that one little section of  
15 river. Probably not much because it's  
16 mostly done by independents. I want to  
17 see the river left as it is. Right now  
18 I can walk in from Burrells Ford to  
19 Ellicott Rock, and it takes me about an  
20 hour and five to ten minutes. I fish  
21 from basically the East Fork, up and  
22 down Ellicott Rock and then walk back  
23 out. As a gentleman mentioned awhile  
24 ago you can't access the river. Only by  
25 boating, and it's a quarter to half a

1 mile to Burrells Ford, and there's no  
2 fishing. That's not true. I've fished  
3 numerous times in my 30 years. I was  
4 just a little kid, and my dad carried me  
5 in there. I'm 35 today. I've been  
6 going in that river for about 30 years  
7 fishing, camping, hiking, and I have  
8 boated part of the river, the lower  
9 section, and I do enjoy it. I respect  
10 the hobby because I would like to do it  
11 myself, but I've got so many hobbies I  
12 can't do it, too. I'm a member of a  
13 rescue squad. Let me tell you, somebody  
14 gets there and gets hurt around  
15 Ellicott's Rock, we have to hike in to  
16 get somebody to get them out. It's  
17 going to take hours. There's such a  
18 thing called "the golden hour in rescue  
19 medicals. If you can't get somebody to  
20 the hospital when they need medical  
21 attention within an hour, their chances  
22 of survival goes down. When it takes  
23 three or four hours to get somebody out,  
24 we need to look at safety as well.  
25 Thank you.

1 TERRY SEYDEN:

2 53.

3 CHARLIE BREITHAUPT:

4 Good afternoon. My name is Charlie  
5 Breithaupt. I'm a citizen of Rabun  
6 County, and I'm also the chairman of the  
7 Georgia Council of Trout Unlimited.  
8 Let me say a quick word about Trout  
9 Unlimited. There's been some question  
10 about TU national support of the ongoing  
11 process here because TU National has an  
12 ongoing process of studying access on  
13 private property, mostly dealing with  
14 issues in the West. This is not such a  
15 case. What we're discussing today is  
16 the zoning issue on public land, and TU  
17 National is totally behind this position  
18 that's been taken by Georgia, South  
19 Carolina, North Carolina, Trout  
20 Unlimited. Ironically the two or three  
21 speakers before me on both sides of the  
22 boating, angling, or whatever group has  
23 touched on the topics that I want to  
24 touch on. The gentleman just proceeded  
25 me talked about being able to reach all

1 of the river. You can reach all of the  
2 river on foot. I haven't reached all of  
3 it yet. I'm saving a couple of places.  
4 A couple of my friends back here who  
5 have told me about them, and --- and you  
6 can get there. It's hard. I'm pretty  
7 old, and I'm no light weight, but I get  
8 down there, and then you don't have a  
9 choice. You've got to get back up. So  
10 that it can be reached. Another  
11 gentleman touched on the idea that  
12 Atlanta and Greenville are going to  
13 become one big suburb, so I went to the  
14 source of all the information, the  
15 internet, and looked up the population  
16 of Knoxville, Asheville, Greenville,  
17 Charlotte, and Columbia. That's about  
18 three or four --- three or four million  
19 people there. That's less than a half a  
20 day's drive. Now I didn't mention my  
21 home town, Atlanta. Five million. And  
22 I left Atlanta about 11:30 today, and I  
23 was up here in less than two hours.  
24 Five million people. You put all those  
25 together, that's over 10 million people

1 are in less than a half a day's drive  
2 from here. That's something that has to  
3 be taken into consideration by  
4 everybody. Also pointed out that it's  
5 growing at about two percent a year. In  
6 a decade, that's 20 percent. That's  
7 another couple of million. The impact  
8 that Atlanta has on this area, as all of  
9 us know, is tremendous. And then take a  
10 look around. This area is growing so  
11 fast. I think it will put a burden on  
12 the Forest Service. From what I see  
13 they have a very tight budget.  
14 Everybody has a tight budget. Theirs is  
15 tighter than most. Right? Yeah.  
16 You have a shrinking staff, from what  
17 I've seen. We're going to have a lot  
18 more to deal with. Right now what we  
19 have is an area that's zoned for foot  
20 traffic only for all of us. We all have  
21 feet, and I think it is an appropriate  
22 designation for it at this time. Thank  
23 you.

24 TERRY SEYDEN:

25 Okay. 54.

1           NANCI KINSER:

2           Hi. My name is Nanci Kinser. I didn't  
3           intend to make a comment today, but I  
4           just couldn't sit idly by. My family  
5           and I own land that back up to the  
6           corridor that's protected along our  
7           beautiful Chattooga River, and first I  
8           would like to say I don't understand the  
9           notion that somehow by opening this  
10          (inaudible) it will somehow ruin the  
11          river. Boaters are among the most  
12          conservative people that I know. They  
13          really know how to take care of this  
14          river. They really never leave fly  
15          fishing gear around, or hooks and line,  
16          and all that stuff. We collect all our  
17          gear before we leave. I also want --- I  
18          am the mother of the future generation,  
19          and three of them you've heard  
20          (inaudible). We've spent a lot of time  
21          letting these children know this river  
22          and love this river as we do. And I  
23          also wanted to speak to the mother who  
24          was concerned about flying a kayak into  
25          the waterfalls where they might be

1 wading, and if you're --- if you're  
2 thinking of wading in the same river at  
3 the same time the kayakers want to be  
4 boating in it, it's probably not smart  
5 to go there anyway, but it would not be  
6 unsafe because of flying kayaks. And in  
7 response to the gentleman who thinks  
8 there may be, you know, 100 Forest  
9 Service people to take care of us on the  
10 upper reaches, that is absurd I think I  
11 would be able to say about that. And to  
12 the Forest Service now. Do something  
13 that the future generations can be proud  
14 of. I understand that you listen to the  
15 words of your chief, and realize there  
16 is no legal basis for this closure in  
17 any law, no law anywhere, including  
18 constitutional law. I hope that you  
19 will be the ones to have the courage to  
20 make this right and set aside this  
21 underhanded, back door, good old boy  
22 agreement that is not based in any law,  
23 and open the upper regions to both.  
24 This status quo needs to change.

25 TERRY SEYDEN:

1           55. Is there a 56 or 57, or is 55 the  
2           last? Okay.

3           ALI KINSER:

4           Okay. I'm Ali Kinser, and I am against  
5           this ban on boaters. I have been around  
6           the Chattooga River since I was very,  
7           very young, (inaudible) a great deal of  
8           respect for the river by my parents who  
9           are boaters. I have heard a lot about  
10          this controversy because my dad has been  
11          way involved, and there is absolutely no  
12          reason that I can see why it's closed.  
13          I know a lot (inaudible), and it just  
14          doesn't make sense to me. I distinctly  
15          remember reading that mechanized  
16          vehicles are not allowed in the  
17          corridor. That makes sense. But on a  
18          recent trip packing down section two  
19          with my family I noticed that there were  
20          several cars down by the river. I asked  
21          how they got down there. Apparently  
22          there are open roads to both Burrells  
23          Ford and (inaudible) on the Georgia side  
24          of the river. Now this is a (inaudible)  
25          way to relieve good management of the

1 river. There's no way that those should  
2 be open, and if we're so scared about  
3 the (inaudible) from the upper river how  
4 come we've not changed where there are  
5 cars going down to the lower river? It  
6 just doesn't make sense to me. This is  
7 a wild and scenic river, and if the  
8 river has to be stocked with fish to  
9 make the fishermen happy and enjoy the  
10 river, then it's not a wild and scenic  
11 experience. The boaters who go to the  
12 upper river right now to have a wild and  
13 scenic experience, there's no changing  
14 that has to be done. Like we have to  
15 stock the river so the fishermen can  
16 enjoy it. It just doesn't seem like  
17 they're enjoying it the raw and natural  
18 state that it's in right now. I love  
19 this river and want to be able to enjoy  
20 the river for the rest of my life and to  
21 learn about the other stretches of river  
22 and enjoy it fully. Thank you.

23 TERRY SEYDEN:

24 Okay. You've been a great audience  
25 listening and respecting everybody.

1           We're checking the back again to see if  
2           there are any other people who have  
3           signed in and wish to make a statement,  
4           and appreciate everybody's attention and  
5           respect. And anybody who is coming to  
6           the Saturday meeting, there are details  
7           of it in the front (inaudible). I guess  
8           we're about at the end of the hearing if  
9           there are no other people who want to  
10          make statements. And I appreciate,  
11          again, you-all taking your time off from  
12          work or from whatever you were doing to  
13          come and share with us your thoughts on  
14          how we should manage the river. Okay.  
15          Thank you. One more late entry. One  
16          late entry. Did I hear that?

17       MAGGIE JOHNSON:

18            Yes.

19       TERRY SEYDEN:

20            All right. And I guess the rules are we  
21            scheduled 1:00 to 5:00.

22       MAGGIE JOHNSON:

23            Fine.

24       TERRY SEYDEN:

25            Okay. Okay. 56.

1           MAGGIE JOHNSON:

2           My name is Maggie Johnson, and I live in  
3           Greenville, South Carolina. I'm 15  
4           years old, and (inaudible) I really  
5           don't think it's right. This is my point  
6           of view because that's all we have left,  
7           the little bit (inaudible) I've been  
8           (inaudible) Jocassee, and I've been  
9           fishing (inaudible) you don't fish that  
10          much (inaudible) I do, and having a  
11          (inaudible) So I just think it's ---  
12          it's not (inaudible) or something  
13          (inaudible) and it's really beautiful up  
14          there, and my brother is living up  
15          there. You all have the whole rest of  
16          the river. And I respect all of you, I  
17          really do, but you have a natural  
18          running river and a little bit left.  
19          And it's just a bad choice. TERRY

20          SEYDEN:

21          That concludes the hearing.

22                                   **( HEARING CONCLUDED )**

23

1 STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )  
2 ) CERTIFICATE  
3 COUNTY OF GREENVILLE )

4 I, KERI J. LUMM, a Notary Public, duly  
5 commissioned and qualified in and for the  
6 State of South Carolina, do hereby certify  
7 that the Public Hearing for the U.S. Forest  
8 Service taken before me at 1:00 p.m. on July  
9 10, 2007; that said Public Hearing was  
10 transcribed under my direction; and that this  
11 transcript is a true record of said Public  
12 Hearing.

13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my  
14 hand and affixed my official seal this  
15 \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2007.

16 \_\_\_\_\_

17 Notary Public for South Carolina

18 My Commission Expires: 10/13/15