

December 21, 2005

Mr. John Cleeves
Project Coordinator
Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212

Re: Upper Chattooga/ Appeal by Ameican Whitewater

Dear Mr. Cleeves:

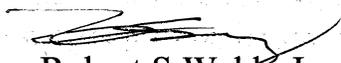
It is my understanding that the American Whitewater Association is seeking access for canoeists, kayakers and paddlers to use the headwaters of the Chattooga River starting at the Grimeshawes Bridge on Whiteside Cove Rd.

I am not a paddler, but knowing that river from Grimeshawes Bridge to the Corkscrew Falls, I can not imagine paddling that part of the river to be much fun nor a challenge. A paddler would face all sorts of obstacles i.e. log jams, shallow waters strewn with rocks making it difficult to navigate if at all, narrow falls and some steep falls that would have to be portaged around through pretty dense woods on steep slopes as well as other obstacles like overgrown laurels and rhododendrons. That portion of the river goes through a pretty precipitous gorge.

The section of the river in question flows through private property that has not been disturbed by a great deal of traffic or use. I truly believe that this portion of the river is unsuitable for any kind of paddling. I have been on Sections 3 & 4 of the lower Chattooga several times which is obviously more appropriate for paddling activities.

I respectfully urge you to not allow access to this part of the Chattooga River for the reasons stated.

Sincerely,


Robert S Webb, Jr

December 21, 2005

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Project Coordinator
Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, SC 29212

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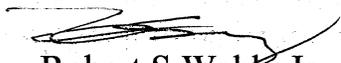
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Sincerely,


Robert S Webb, Jr

The Rabun County Coalition

Robert L. Alexander, President

P.O. Box 1928

Clayton, GA 30525

December 27, 2005

Mr. John Cleevef
Project Coordinator
4931 Broad River Rd.
Columbia, SC 29212

Ref: Chattooga River Kayak & Rafting above Hwy 28 Bridge.

Dear Mr. Cleevef:

I am 67 years of age and have fished the Chattooga River since about the age of 7 years. At one time I could have fished by moonlit from the mouth of Licklog Creek up river to Sandy Ford, Cannie Island, Earls Ford, Turn Hole, Hwy 28 Bridge, Reed Creek, and Rock Gorge, which the old timers called the rock cliffs, to Salt Trough where we often camped with no problem. In the 1940's and 50's we could drive by way of Nicholson Ford to Salt Trough. I fished Burrells ford and camped in there when we had to access it by way of Satolah. Therefore, I have as much adequate knowledge and experience as any person to qualify me for the following statements. I have forgotten more than this new breed of Forest Service personnel may ever know about the River.

I am vehemently opposed to any and all boating, kayaking, and rafting above the Hwy 28 bridge. There is no justifiable reason for such a venture. The only thing propelling such a project is either money, ego, or both.

When I started fishing the Chattooga, there were large Brown and Rainbow Trout from its headwaters to Tugaloo Dam. The River was one of pristine beauty and esthetic quality. Much of that is gone now. The influx of people has ruined the quality experience and quietness of this majestic River.

The "boaters," my term for all floating activity, have taken over the River from the Hwy 28 Bridge to Tugaloo Lake. The Forest Service has devastated much of the land planting pines in place of hardwoods. The pine forests have raised the water run off temperature which in turn heats the River. Where the rocks were one time slick and clean slime now permeates the bottom. We no longer need to purchase a Trout Stamp from the Confluence of Warwoman Creek and the Chattooga River south. The waters have warmed and a healthy stock of Native Trout cannot be attained in the condition the River now exists. I have taken the water temperature just below the confluence of the West Fork and the East Fork of the Chattooga below Hwy 28 Bridge and have noted it at 76 degrees in July. This temperature is one that Trout will find barely sustainable or even not at all. At one time Brook Trout could be caught above the Hwy 28 Bridge. No longer.

The "boaters" have access to the Chattooga from the 28 Bridge south with tremendous mileage to navigate. Enough is enough! There is no justifiable reason why they should be allowed to take over the whole river and make things miserable for the fishermen above the 28 Bridge. Good management practices would dictate that the "boaters" utilize the River below the 28 Bridge, and that the Fishermen have their area above the Bridge.

The Chattooga is not conducive to quality "boating" navigation above the Bridge. As one progresses up stream above the Pig Pen Creek confluence, the River narrows until a conflict will arise between fishermen and "boaters". The Rock Gorge is too narrow to accommodate both entities. One entity must yield to the other and get out of the River to let the other either fish or pass. This will create a conflict I assure you. The "boaters" must take

their crafts out of the River and go around to navigate the dangerous falls upstream anyway.

The area especially above the two old Nicholson Fords is "sacred ground" to us fishermen. It should be left undisturbed by the "boaters". The River does possess Trout and some very large ones above the 28 Bridge. The rafters will disturb the fish, fishing, and fishermen. Sixty years experience on the River says, "leave us alone!" We desire an undisturbed wilderness atmosphere. We want seclusion and silence. A Fisherman does not want to be pestered, his fishing ruined, and a bunch of loud mouth yelling individuals around him. This is the only area on the Chattooga left that is not affected by the "Boaters". Leave it as is, where is! If you do not I assure you direct conflicts will erupt as the river is too narrow in places to accommodate both entities, and many fishermen will refuse to give ground. The "boaters" then have a choice to boat over the fishermen, get into an altercation, or stop and wait until the fisherman vacates the water. I personally have no intention of moving for any water craft, and I know other fishermen who will not budge either!

With a steady stream of "boaters" the Trout will become nocturnal in feeding and the quality fisheries will be subjected to degradation and degeneration. Already, Stocked Fish have been introduced to the upper River; this is bad news in itself as they compete with the Native Trout and the Native Trout will loose in the long run.

The River has been basically devastated below the Hwy 28 Bridge as far as Trout fishing goes. Is the Forest Service intent on destroying the River above the 28 Bridge too? The River no longer can be counted as a place of quietness or a peaceful place of enjoyment for fishermen. Our Government supported Universities are turning out Government controlled workers who have no conception of what the Chattooga River was and should be. They follow the brainwashing and orientation of a bunch of professors who pipe to the Government tune with little regard for the good of the Forest or the River. The Foresters abide by the political whim of the controlling party or lose their jobs. This is not management in the best interests of the people. Multiple Use: The fishermen above the Bridge; all others below the Bridge.

In conclusion: I am the person who filed the Precedent setting case against the Forest Service in Georgia way back in about 1991. I wrote the briefs, and my Attorney went to court, won, and opened up the South to litigation. And then from there to massive stopping of the Forest Service and its practices. I I am familiar with your workings and know whereof I speak. Please pay attention now before problems arise; do not allow the "boaters" to navigate above the Hwy 28 Bridge. In fact apply stiff \$1000 penalties to those who do so.

Thank you for listening. I pray this letter has not been in vain.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Alexander

Marvin M. Thomas, III
253 Country Club Rd.
Asheville, NC 28804

February 2, 2006

Mr. John Cleeves
Sumter National Forest
4931 Broad River Rd.
Columbia, SC 29212

Dear Mr. Cleeves,

I am writing today due to my continued concern over the effects that white-water kayaking would have on the Chattooga River above Bull Pen Bridge. This area which is protected under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, offers one of the few places a person can go to enjoy a quiet afternoon with their family. Often we will load up the car on Saturday morning with bathing suits, fishing rods and a picnic to go and enjoy this fantastic area. The thought of this being ruined by whitewater enthusiasts is very disheartening. These people have many places to go that are far more suitable to their sport than section 00. If kayaking were allowed I could not allow my children to enjoy the stream without seriously jeopardizing their safety and I'm just not that kind of parent. Some of the falls and gorges are so narrow and steep that a boater could not see upcoming hazards (my kids) nor could my kids hear the approaching boaters.

I'm not a kayaker but I understand their desire to explore new territory. It just seems pointless to me that they would like to paddle a stream that is so narrow and shallow that you can rock hop across many areas without getting your socks wet. In so doing the activities of those trying to enjoy some peace and quiet, a little fishing, swimming, salamander hunting, hiking or wildlife viewing will be displaced once again by some extreme sports enthusiasts dragging their vessels down a stream that's not suitable for their activity.

Sincerely,



Marvin M. Thomas, III

CC: USFS

Phillip Lammonds
502 Prince Street
Georgetown, SC 29440

February 21, 2006

Mr. John Cleeves
Sumter National Forest
4931 Broad River Road
Columbia, South Carolina 29212

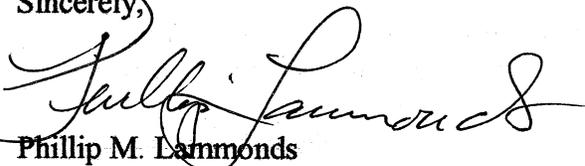
Dear Mr. Cleeves,

This is to address a growing concern affecting several sections of the Chattooga River. This area is considered "wild and scenic" by a congressional act. This has also been a home for many endangered species, both plants and animals. Certain sections of this river are remote and virtually pristine to the point that all but a few recreational efforts disturb the setting and ambiance.

My particular concern is increasing the use of sections of the river by kayakers that seem to be unaware or respectful of most if not all of the traditional recreational pursuits on the Chattooga. Clearly there are sections of the river that are more navigable because of depth, width etc. The designations of those areas make sense. It's the smaller more remote sections that are the most in jeopardy. These are and have been attractive to fly fishermen, picnickers and campers. I would argue that none of these endeavors are at all a hindrance to kayaking. However, conversely an afternoon of fly fishing a quiet pool can be ruined by the passing of one even small group of kayakers.

Essentially, it is a concern of mine as well as many other long time stewards of this pristine river that the uncontrolled use by kayakers, particularly above Bull Pen Bridge section, would be environmentally destructive and create mono-culture of recreation that would destroy the ability for other traditional pursuits to exist in peace.

Sincerely,



Phillip M. Lammonds