

# CHATTOOGA RIVER COMMENTS NEEDED

**August 30th** Deadline for Comments.

For the full history of the Chattooga Boating Issue go [Here](#).



## At Issue:

The U.S. Forest Service appears poised to more than double the headwaters reaches that would open to boating for the first time since 1976.

Well-funded kayak lobbies continue to pursue their goal of opening the entire 21-mile stretch of wild river to unlimited boating all the time at all river flows.

The latest proposal from the Forest Service seems to be an attempt to blunt the federal court suit that American Whitewater and five other boating groups and three individual boaters have brought in federal court in Greenville, S.C. The suit attempts to force a court settlement of the issue before the forest agency completes its administrative review process.

## Click the links below to download the latest from the Forest Service:

- [USDA Forest Service Asks Public to Review Assessment of Recreation Uses on the Upper Segment of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River](#) (news release July 15, 2011)
- [Cover Letter for Environmental Assessment on Recreation Uses on the Upper Segment of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River](#) (July 15, 2011)
- [Environmental Assessment on Recreation Uses on the Upper Segment of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River](#) (4.6 MB July 15, 2011)

Details: Rather than 7 miles of Upper Chattooga previously contemplated for boating by the Agency, forest planners led by the Sumter National Forest propose to open 16.5 miles of the narrow, twisting headwaters reaches from Green Creek to Lick Log Creek between Dec. 1 and March 1, at all flow levels.

Georgia ForestWatch believes that opening these parts of the river is unwise. The stretch includes the sensitive Chattooga Cliffs, the entire Ellicott Rock Wilderness and the equally wild Rock Gorge section of the river. These parts of the river include a variety of sensitive and endangered plant and lichen species. Currently a wild, spiritual haven, the Upper Chattooga is Georgia's only stretch of river designated as wild and scenic and closed to boating. Keep one piece of river natural!

We ask the Forest Service to draw a line at the Route 28 bridge (the lower-most boundary of the Upper Chattooga area) to safeguard it for continued use by hunters, hikers, anglers, campers, picnickers, nature lovers, birders, botanists, and those who prefer solitude in one of the last remaining wild places in the entire Southern Appalachians and Southeast.

## Your letters

-- **best penned in your own words rather than in a form letter**

-- **should be forwarded as follows:**

### Comments on the Upper Chattooga EA

c/o USDA Forest Supervisor's Office  
Sumter National Forest  
4931 Broad River Road  
Columbia, South Carolina 29212-3530

or e-mailed to: [comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-southern-francismarion-sumter@fs.fed.us)

## May we suggest you make the following points:

- You reject the boating lobby's insistence on unrestricted access (Alternative 8 of the EA)
- You reject the Forest Service partial opening (Alternative 12 of the EA)
- You support the Agency's new efforts to rehabilitate the Upper Chattooga corridor and establish appropriate limits on visitor group sizes and encounters in efforts to maintain a sense of solitude
- You support a continued balance of uses, which offers boating on the lower 36 miles of this river, while leaving the Upper Chattooga as is, protected for the benefit of future generations
  - The boaters already have a wealth of nearby challenging whitewater to paddle, including Overflow and Holcomb creeks and on the West Fork of the Chattooga, where boating is already legal and permitted.
- You are concerned about the Forest Service commitment and abilities to properly monitor and enforce any new boating areas.

We'd also like you to forward copies of your comments to our elected federal representatives at the addresses below:

[Senator Saxby Chambliss](#)

Fax: 202-224-0103

[Senator Johnny Isakson](#)

Fax: 202-228-0724

[Congressman Paul Broun \(north-east Georgia\)](#)

Fax: 706-886-1009

[Congressman Tom Graves \(north-west Georgia\)](#)

Fax: 770-535-2765