



# **NATIONAL FORESTS IN NORTH • CAROLINA**

**USDA FOREST SERVICE, 160A ZILICOA STREET, ASHEVILLE, NC 28801**

## **NEWS • RELEASE**

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### **Second Boating Flow on the Cheoah River October 1**

ROBBINSVILLE, N.C.— The first boating flow on the Cheoah River on September 17 was extremely successful and drew over 500 participants from across the Nation. Boaters from as far away as Oregon and Idaho made the trip to experience the Class IV/IV+ rapids on the Cheoah River. Two additional flows are scheduled for October 1 and November 2. Nineteen similar one-day releases are scheduled on an annual basis beginning in 2006. The Cheoah River is located on the Nantahala National Forest near Robbinsville. The U.S. Forest Service will be managing the recreational activities.

The river has many Class IV/IV+ rapids and residual vegetation that requires a high skill level to negotiate—only advanced or expert boaters with proper equipment should attempt running the river this fall. While not offered in 2005, in future years, expert guides will be available to lead raft trips.

Because there is very limited parking at the put-in and adjacent to the river, boaters should use the shuttle service on October 1. Additional shuttles will be provided by Nantahala Outdoor Center at no cost to ensure all boaters are able to access the river in a timely manner. The shuttle service is only temporary as the Forest Service is planning to begin construction next year of a put-in that will include parking for over 200 vehicles.

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The shuttle will be located at the Robbinsville High School and begin transporting boaters from 8 AM to 2 PM with the last shuttle leaving from the take-out at 6 PM. Shuttles have the ability to transport up to 120 passengers every hour along with their boats and equipment. Launch windows will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis as part of a river capacity study being conducted by the Forest Service to determine the number and type of boaters that can safely use the river for future years.

The cost for boaters will be \$6 – this includes the mandatory fee of \$3 to the Forest Service, as the Cheoah River is a National Forest fee area. Wrist bands will be sold at the high school by the Forest Service with funds to be used for future construction projects. A \$3 parking fee will be collected by the Graham County Rescue Squad to support training for river rescue.

The high water section of the Cheoah River is nine miles long. To ensure public safety, the following regulations will be enforced on the Cheoah River during recreational boating days:

- No alcoholic beverages within 500 feet of the river.
- No camping within 500 feet of the river.
- No nighttime floating, rafting, or tubing (between sunset and sunrise).
- No parking within 500 feet of the river, except in designated parking areas.
- No watercraft used other than non-motorized, hard-bottom canoes and kayaks, or inflatable watercraft with a minimum of four (4) internal air chambers.
- Users must wear a helmet and a properly fitted personal floatation device (PFD) rated “Coast Guard Approved (Type III, III/V, or V)”.

Lodging is available in Robbinsville – interested boaters can contact the Graham County Travel and Tourism Board at 818-479-3790. Camping is available at nearby Cheoah Point and Horse Cove campgrounds operated by the Forest Service. Additional information about the Cheoah River can be found on the American Whitewater website at “[www.americanwhitewater.org](http://www.americanwhitewater.org)”, the Nantahala Outdoor Center website at “[www.noc.com/river\\_cheoah.html](http://www.noc.com/river_cheoah.html)”, or by contacting the Cheoah Ranger District at 828-479-6431.