



**Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forest Service Announces Final Chattooga Decision Still Under Internal Review

(Columbia, S.C.) The Forest Service announced today that the final decision on recreation uses on the upper Wild and Scenic Chattooga River is under internal review and will not be released this month as planned.

“Our timeline has slipped for several reasons,” said Jerome Thomas, forest supervisor for the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests. “First, at the request of our constituents, we extended the public comment period on the pre-decisional Environmental Analysis (EA). We also received more than 3,000 individual e-mails and letters which had to be analyzed. We’re working hard to complete our work, but we won’t be releasing our final decision until next year.”

For more information on the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River user-capacity analysis, visit the Web at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/fms>.

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The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.