



File Code: 1570

Date: JUL 1 2009

Mr. John D. Austin, Jr.
Patton Boggs LLP
2550 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20037-1350

Dear Mr. Austin:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of American Whitewater dated May 28, 2009.

The Southern Region and the three National Forests involved in management of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River are working diligently to complete an appropriate analysis and adjust or amend the Land and Resource Management Plans for the Sumter National Forest, the Chattahoochee National Forest, and the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest to reflect a new decision based on the findings. Due to complexities inherent in the analysis of social interactions as well as resource impacts and environmental effects, the analysis has taken much longer than anyone expected at the outset.

Associate Deputy Chief Gloria Manning has twice extended the timeline for completion of the decision-making process, once in April 2008 and again in January 2009. These extensions were needed to fully understand the situation, develop feasible alternatives, and engage the public in the effort. Most recently, we have been conducting an extensive legal review to ensure that we have addressed all relevant concerns.

At this time we are expecting a final decision before the end of summer. Please contact Tony White, Acting Forest Supervisor, Sumter National Forest at (803) 561-4000 if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



JOEL D. HOLTROP
Deputy Chief, National Forest System

cc: Tony L White, Chris Liggett, Chris N Brown, Ann M Christensen

