

Forest Service to allow boating on Chattooga

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The Upper Chattooga River will be open to boaters for the first time in more than three decades starting Dec. 1.

The U.S. Forest Service released their final decision on managing recreation on the 57-mile river that runs from the headwaters near Cashiers down along the Georgia and South Carolina state lines.

The final environmental assessment allows limited, non-motorized boating on seven miles of the river during times of high flow, that the forest service estimates would amount to an average of six days a year.

Boating had been banned by the forest service on 21 miles of the upper portion of the river since 1976. The agency's Washington office forced the local branch of the forest service to reexamine recreation on the river after American Whitewater challenged the a 2004 decision by the forest service to continue the ban.

The Chattooga, designated a Wild and Scenic River in 1974, is one of the few such designated rivers known to ban boating.