



Photo by Peter McIntosh

December 10, 2018

Dear Friend of the Chattooga Conservancy,

Season's greetings and best wishes for a wonderful holiday season! The Chattooga Conservancy has enjoyed a productive and busy year — one that was made possible with the generosity of our members. **Thank you again for supporting our work in 2018!**

Recently, as the first snow of the season fell on the Chattooga River, I was once again taken aback by the beauty and power within this remarkable watershed. Crisp white snow contrasts the dark autumn leaves and downed trees, and traces the contours of the landscape to highlight hidden details. It is a wondrous experience to watch the seasons change in the watershed, to witness the natural cycles of the river and its ecosystems, and I am often reminded of the importance of preserving the watershed's truly wild and spectacular places. Looking ahead to the new year, the Chattooga Conservancy will continue working to protect, promote and restore the magnificent Chattooga River watershed. *But to be successful, we need your help.*

**I am writing today to ask you to consider making a year-end donation to add to your membership support. Please continue to help sustain the Chattooga Conservancy's important work through an extra contribution during this holiday season!**

As we reflect on the year's accomplishments, we are humbled by the generosity of our members. *Some of the work you helped to accomplish in 2018, and that we will be building on in 2019, includes:*

- Warwoman Creek Watershed Management Plan, a comprehensive study based on the EPA's Nine Elements of Watershed Planning, that opens the door for future state and federal funds to improve water quality in this polluted tributary to the Chattooga River.
- Monitoring the proposed Southside Project, and fighting to protect old growth forests, potential wilderness areas, and state natural heritage areas in the Chattooga's headwaters.
- Oversight of the ongoing Nantahala-Pisgah Forest Plan Revision, and working to protect the Overflow Creek, Terrapin Mountain, and Ellicott Rock areas in the Chattooga's headwaters.

- Native Cane Restoration, through stewardship, expanding the project site and following a Management Plan in cooperation with the Forest Service to restore a native canebroke ecosystem next to Chattooga River.

**New opportunities are on the horizon for the Chattooga Conservancy, and we aspire to be even more productive and successful in 2019! *You can help ensure that we start the year strong & prepared to take on new challenges facing the watershed.***

Your contribution will help us undertake important and exciting endeavors in 2019, including:

- **Stekoa Creek Watershed Management Plan Implementation**, a project that includes several components aimed to improve water quality in this polluted Chattooga River tributary. Specific projects include:
  - *A green infrastructure demonstration project*, to include installation of rain gardens, tree islands, and sections of permeable pavement at a prominent site on Hwy. 441 to remediate a major source of storm water pollution in Stekoa Creek;
  - *Repairing or replacing failing septic systems*, with help of the Rabun County Health Dept.;
  - *An agricultural Best Management Practices project*, to be implemented in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and
  - Composing a *Citizen's Guide to the Stekoa Creek Watershed*.
- **Protection of Forests and Rivers**, by advocating for permanent protection of Terrapin Mountain, Overflow Wilderness Study Area, Ellicott Rock West Wilderness Extension Area, and Overflow Creek and its East & West Forks, through recognition as wilderness, Wild and Scenic, or other protective designations.
- **Foothills Landscape Initiative**. The Chattahoochee National Forest is in the development phase of this massive project encompassing nearly 150,000 acres of public land in NE Georgia. Meetings and an Environmental Assessment are expected in 2019.

**We know you understand how important the Chattooga River watershed and nearby special places are—for clean water, recreation, critical wild lands, economic values, and all of the unique opportunities offered by these extraordinary resources.**

Please make a year-end, tax-deductible contribution that will enable the Chattooga Conservancy to continue working on these difficult issues that are so important to so many people. Thank you!

On behalf of our great river,



Nicole Hayler, Executive Director