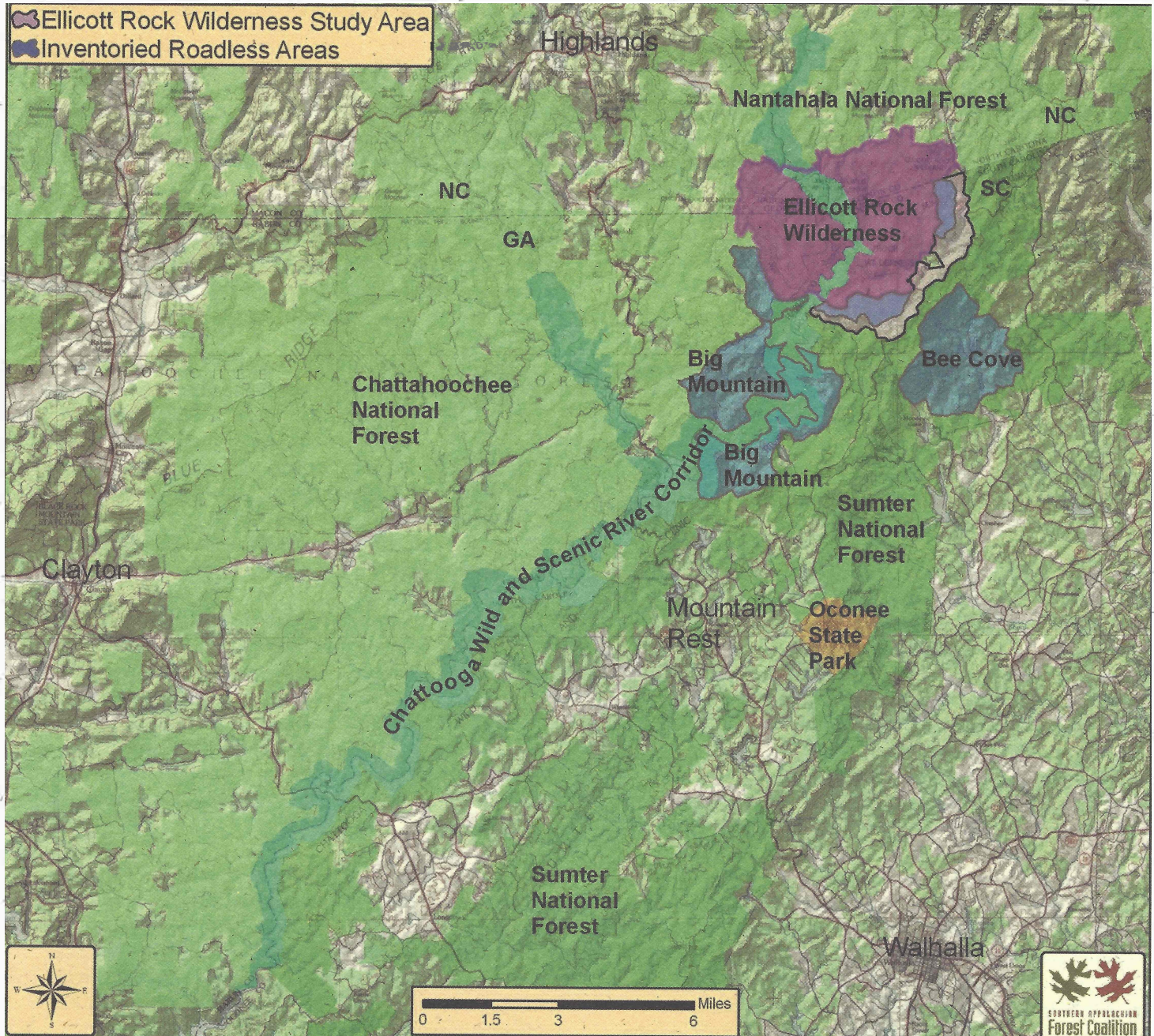




Chattooga Quarterly

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"PROTECTED LANDS" IN THE TAMASSEE QUADRANGLE AREA OF THE CHATTOOGA RIVER HEADWATERS
The Ellicott Rock Wilderness Study Area, Big Mountain and Bee Cove Roadless Areas need further protections

map created by Hugh Irwin

Inside

Director's Page.....	2	Watershed Update	11
Peregrine Falcons	3	Bird Walk <i>FRIDAY MAY 23RD</i>	15
Tamassee Quad	5	Members' Pages	16

Director's Page

Buzz Williams

In my article "The Tamassee Quad," in this issue of the *Chattooga Quarterly*, reference is made to "protected lands." I used this term in the relative sense, because man-made rules and regulations for protecting wildlands can and do get changed. What is protected today may not be protected under a new rule. Worse yet, rules are ambiguous. When this is the case, wildlands management is a matter of interpretation. Often, land managers believe that a protected status such as "wilderness" or a "roadless" designation will limit their ability to manage. This sometimes leads to a bias against roadless or wilderness designation. The present status of vast areas in and linked to the Chattooga River Basin ecosystem that need protection is a very tenuous situation.

In order to explore the idea of better protection for wild lands, it is critical to define just what a wild land really is. Roadless areas and designated wilderness are more representative of "true wild lands" than wild and scenic rivers because by definition, these areas are large blocks of remote unroaded back country. Whereas, "wild" sections of wild and scenic rivers can be narrow unbuffered corridors. This is especially true in the eastern U. S.

Periodically, the Forest Service conducts an inventory of national forest lands to determine if any areas are qualified for possible wilderness designation. What that boils down to is that inventoried "roadless areas" in the eastern U. S. are those lands that contained less than 1 mile of "officially designated roads" per 1,000 acres and are, therefore, eligible to become wilderness. So, one definition of wild lands in the eastern U. S. could be those areas that are either already designated wilderness areas or those "roadless" lands that are qualified to become wilderness areas.

There are also lands that should have been inventoried as roadless, but were not. The Bee Cove Roadless Area, which I describe as critical wild lands in my article on the Tamassee Quadrangle, recently shrank from about 6,000 acres to 2,999 acres when the Sumter National Forest revised their forest plan in 2004. As it happened, when the Forest Service inventoried the Bee Cove area, they counted two old logging roads as officially designated roads. These roads are at present unmaintained and choked with fallen trees. The fact is that the Forest Service never uses these roads, but they came in handy when counting road miles for roadless area designation. When they counted these two old logging roads and applied some other new criteria about "sights and sounds," about half of the former Persimmon Mountain Roadless Area (a.k.a. Bee Cove) was disqualified for the new inventory.

By word of possible explanation, the agency would rather have potential access for management than see the land designated wilderness, and lose the ability to revive these old, unmaintained roads. As a result, the Forest Service seems to be slowly disqualifying roadless areas with each successive round of forest plan revisions.

What about the 2,999 acres Bee Cove Roadless Area that did make it on to the officially designated list? That's a problem, too. In the Final Revised Forest Plan for the Sumter National Forest, dated 2004, the Forest Service decided that they would allow road-building in 2,547 acres of the Bee Cove Roadless Area. Most of this area where they could build roads, if they found a good reason, would be in the White Rock Scenic Area. In other words, the Forest Service has decided that their plans for management of a roadless area is to allow road-building in 85% of the area. Deja vu all over again.

In the Final Revised Forest Plan for the Sumter National Forest (dated 2004) the Bee Cove Roadless Area shrank from about 6,000 acres to 2,999 acres; at the same time, the Forest Service decided they would allow road-building in 2,547 acres of the Roadless Area.

Sooner or later the Forest Service will get around to conducting another roadless area inventory. My guess is that after a period of time, these currently inventoried roadless areas will see some road building where it is allowed under existing forest management guidelines. If this is the case, as it was with the last re-inventory after a period of management, the Bee Cove Roadless Area will shrink even further.

Ultimately, permanent protection for roadless areas and wilderness will depend on management decisions made on the principles of conservation biology, instead of a game of bean-counting where you eat the beans as you go. In order for this to happen, congress will have to

rewrite the Forest Service's mission to one that places wildlands and ecosystem management ahead of timber production and road-building.

In the meantime, we need immediate protection for what we have right now. The solution is with a bill winding its way through congress called H. R. 2516, or the National Roadless Area Conservation Act. This bill would codify the Roadless Area Conservation Rule that was put in place as Bill Clinton left office on January 12, 2001. This rule would protect all remaining inventoried areas in the national forest system. Unfortunately, George Bush has been looking for a way around the Roadless Rule during his whole time in office. Now, as he is about to leave, President Bush is taking a page out of Clinton's book and is trying in his 11th hour to pass his own rule to nullify the Roadless Rule. Unless citizens weigh in with their congressional representatives to pass the National Roadless Area Conservation Act, Bush will enact his rule and the Forest Service will be back as usual trying to disqualify and manage roadless areas to death.

Peregrine Falcons

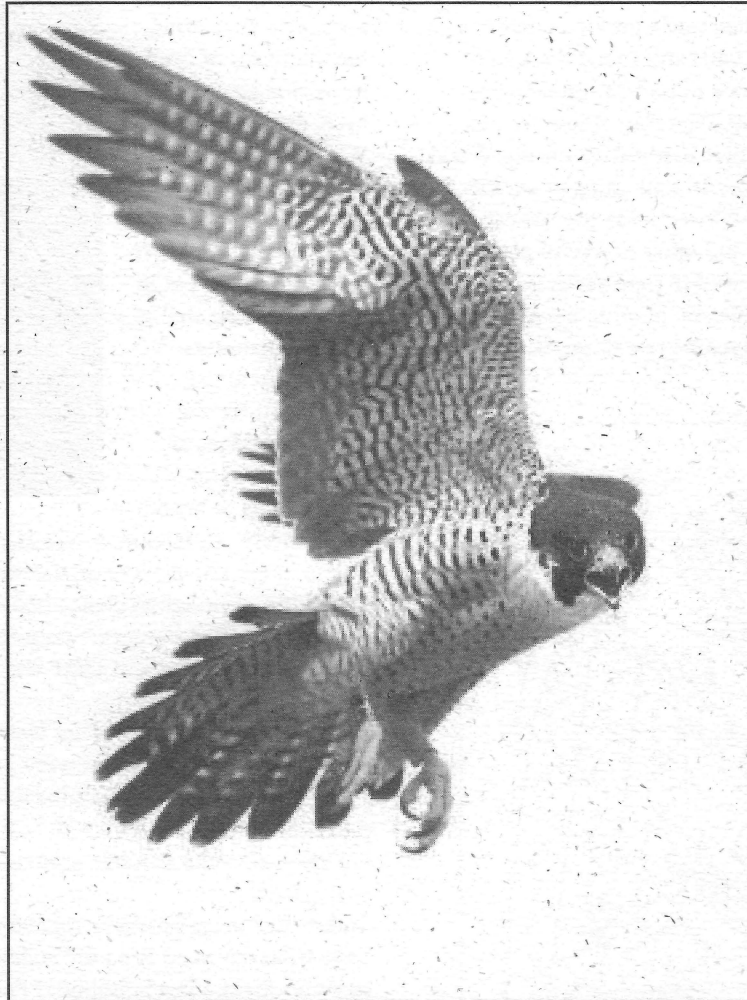
Buzz Williams

To see a Peregrine Falcon flash out of the sky like a thunderbolt, turn on a razor sharp wing with breathtaking agility and disappear into the distance with a blaze of speed, can only conjure musings of a higher power. Undoubtedly, this is the bird that inspired the Native American myth that earned it the name "Thunderbird."

Peregrine Falcons inhabit every continent except Antarctica. The name peregrine means "pilgrim" or "wanderer" owing to its wide range and migratory patterns. The inspirational power of this magnificent raptor goes back to prehistoric times in Egypt, China, Europe, and the Americas. Primitive hunters and warriors revered the Peregrine Falcon for its desired qualities of speed, courage, agility, keen eye sight, and sheer power. In fact, for North American Indians, the inspirational qualities of the Peregrine transcended into the ethereal. They believed that Peregrines were messengers from the Great Spirit. Consequently, the stylized traits of the falcon resembling the dark, helmet-like plumage patterns that extend from beneath the eye down the sides of its head appear on ancient gorgets and pottery found in archeological sites throughout the Americas. Archeologists refer to this as the "forked eye motif" in the Southeastern ceremonial complex.

The Peregrine Falcon is an amazingly adaptable species. It prefers to lay eggs in a depression on a sheltered cliff ledge but will also nest in tall trees, isolated peat bogs, and in the abandoned nest of other raptors. The falcon will lay from one to four beautiful cream colored eggs, mottled with red or dark brown markings. The female usually sets the eggs while the male hunts for food during the month-long incubation period.

The Peregrine Falcon is a great provider for its young hatchlings. About the size of a crow (females are larger than males at about 1.9 pounds), the Peregrine will take on prey much larger—even ducks—and therefore is sometimes called the "duck hawk." Peregrines have big feet that are used to deliver a hard blow from a diving "stoop," which have been clocked at up to 270 m.p.h. Equipped with strong talons and a unique "notched" beak like a can opener, peregrines knock their prey senseless from a dive, then catch and dispatch the fallen bird in a death grip, all in mid-air.



Peregrine Falcons dispatch prey by delivering a hard blow with their feet from a high speed, diving "stoop" that has been measured at up to 270 m.p.h.

The breeding habit of the Peregrine is monogamous, and they are very territorial with breeding pairs nesting about five miles apart. They are also prone to abandon their nest if disturbed, all of which tend to limit population expansion. Yet because they are very adept hunters, their populations have been traditionally stable.

This changed radically in the 1950s when Peregrine Falcon populations mysteriously plummeted. The mystery began to unravel in Wales in 1960, when homing pigeon enthusiasts petitioned the British government to lift the ban on killing Peregrine Falcons. Petitioners claimed that rising populations of falcons were killing their pigeons. A biologist named Derek Ratcliffe was assigned to look into the complaint. Ratcliffe knew that falcons return every year to the same nests of their ancestors. He studied ornithological records and talked to falconers, birdwatchers and egg collectors to find out where traditional Peregrine Falcon nesting sites were located. Ratcliffe visited the sites to see which ones were being used for nesting by Peregrines. He found that only 8% of the nesting sites were being used. Upon further investigation, Ratcliffe found that Peregrine nests contained many broken egg shell fragments. In some active sites, he discovered that Peregrines were eating their own eggs.

Peregrine Falcons

At about the same time that Ratcliffe was studying Peregrines in Wales, a biologist from Wisconsin named Joseph Hickey, who was also interested in Peregrines, had heard rumors that the Peregrine populations in the United States were declining. He also began looking into the facts. Hickey's findings, like those of Ratcliffe, were shocking. He found that the Peregrine falcon had disappeared from eastern North America. Studies in 36 countries soon produced similar findings.

One prevalent theory explaining the precipitous decline of the Peregrine Falcon was that it was linked to the increased use of new synthetic pesticides. One by one the clues added up until the theory was proven. Hickey had made previous inventories of Peregrine populations in the 1940s and found them to be flourishing. The very first evidence of population declines dated to the 1950s. This pinpointed the time frame for the decline. It was also known that the allied forces during World War II had developed a new pesticide containing synthetic "organochlorides." This powerful insecticide was known as DDT. After World War II, DDT and other powerful pesticides such as aldrin and dieldrin were used to treat seeds in Britain, which were eaten in great quantities by homing pigeons. In fact, the use of DDT on a world-wide scale grew dramatically after World War II.



Stylized traits of the Peregrine Falcon appear on ancient gorgets and pottery found at Native American archeological sites.

Researchers were soon documenting the effects of DDT on wildlife. Back in Britain, Ratcliffe came up with a theory that Peregrine eggs were breaking because their shells had developed too thin, related to the side effects of the DDT. He proved this theory by measuring the thickness of broken Peregrine eggs from nests used after World War II and those from eggs collected prior to the war. After further analysis, DDT was found to be present in the broken egg shells in high quantities. It was concluded that DDT affected the calcification of egg shells, which caused eggs to break prematurely. In Britain, it was also documented that Peregrine Falcon populations were on the upswing after banning dieldrin and aldrin. Enough evidence had now been gathered to prove conclusively that Peregrine populations were in decline because of the harmful effects of DDT and other pesticides.

In 1970, the Peregrine Falcon was listed as an endangered species and a desperate recovery program was begun. Today Peregrines have rebounded due to effective reintroduction programs headed up by the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service in concert with state wildlife agencies.

Today the Peregrines have recovered to the point that they have been removed from the endangered species list, but much recovery work must continue if Peregrines are to be once again abundant in our Southern Appalachian Mountains. In our area, one of the best places to see Peregrine Falcons is in the headwaters of the Chattooga River watershed at Whiteside Mountain.

This spring during Peregrine Falcon breeding season, go up and watch for this incredible raptor. With a little luck you may see a young male performing some amazing acrobatics to attract a mate. If so, you also may be inspired by a message from the "great spirit" to help educate others about the importance of continuing the recovery of this amazing creature.

The story of the decline of many species of birds due to the effects of DDT and other lethal pesticides was brought to the forefront by Rachel Carson's book, Silent Spring.

Carson's powerful and compassionate book inspired congress to ban DDT and other dangerous, untested pesticides and brought about an amazing effort to recover the Peregrine Falcon. In fact, Rachel Carson's compassionate advocacy for protecting our environment is certainly at the foundation of the environmental movement.

The Tamassee Quadrangle

Buzz Williams

This is the second in a series of articles that explores the Chattooga River watershed by taking a close look at individual sections as defined by U. S. Geological Survey quadrangle maps. Our first article appeared in the *Chattooga Quarterly* winter 2006 issue, and started with the Cashiers quad located in the northeastern sector of the Chattooga watershed. This article will take a look at the Tamassee quad that lies due south of the Cashiers quad, north of the Walhalla quad, west of the Salem quad, and east of the Satolah quad.

The area encompassed by the Tamassee Quad covers the most remote part of the Chattooga River Gorge, which is one of seven river gorges falling sharply off of the Blue Ridge Escarpment on the eastern side of the Continental Divide. In addition to the Chattooga, remote river gorges occur on the Chauga, Whitewater, Thompson, Horsepasture, Toxaway and Eastatoe Rivers. The portion of the Blue Ridge Mountain Range that runs from the state line between North Carolina and South Carolina, above the Greenville watershed to the Highlands Plateau, is very steep. Here, sharp ridges alternating with "spectacular gorges" (DuMond) radiate to the south, off of the "Blue Wall" (another name for this section of the escarpment). The exception is the Chattooga River, which flows to the southwest, barred by Chattooga Ridge of the same directional orientation. The Chattooga is also the longest, and has the least gradient of its six sister escarpment rivers. While the Chattooga does not have any falls that would compare to the spectacular Whitewater Falls on the Whitewater River, or Rainbow and Windy Falls on the Horsepasture River, it has several magnificent, swift "mini" gorges at Chattooga Cliffs, from Big Bend Falls through the Rock Gorge to Lick Log Creek, and at the Five Falls on section IV.

There are other factors that make this area a very special place. On the steep, southeastern side of Chattooga Ridge there are many beautiful waterfalls. The geology is also unique in that the Brevard Fault, with its rich circumneutral soils, runs across the ridge to the southwest. Gold was once found in commercial quantities to the north of Tamassee, Townes and Cheohee Creeks. The geology also helped form the cultural history of the area. Native Americans once thrived in the fertile flood plain at the base of Chattooga Ridge, on its southeastern front. Ancient trails, many of which were later used by early settlers, followed the creeks and ridges up over gaps in Chattooga Ridge at Burrells Ford and Nicholson Ford.

THE TAMASSEE QUAD IS A CRITICAL CORE AREA

The greatest value of this area is the presence of large blocks of relatively undisturbed native habitat inhabited by populations of sensitive, rare, and endangered species of plants and animal. The wildlands of the Tamassee Quad provide a great opportunity

to apply principles of conservation biology to protect, buffer, and link core wildlands for enhancing the viability of native species. The added value of outstanding backcountry recreation, whether it be trout fishing, hiking, camping, bird watching or whitewater paddling in these beautiful scenic lands provide a respite for the soul. The area is also rich in cultural heritage. The combination of all these attributes makes this area a high priority for the Chattooga Conservancy's mission to ensure the viability of native species, preserve cultural heritage, and promote the watershed as a place of learning and recreation.

Protected lands in the Tamassee Quad include the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area, Ellicott Rock Roadless Areas I & II, Big Mountain Roadless Area, Bee Cove Roadless Area, White Rock Scenic Area, Chattooga Wild and Scenic River Corridor, part of Oconee State Park, the Walhalla Fish Hatchery and the Piedmont Tree Nursery. This cluster of protected lands forms a "core" area as defined in terms of conservation biology. This core area is strategically linked to other protected lands to the northeast, and across to the Blue Ridge Escarpment, Duke Energy lands, and into the Jocassee Gorge and the Mountain Bridge Wilderness Area. The linkages also extend to the west and southwest into the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River Corridor and the Chattahoochee National Forest, and to the north into the Nantahala National Forest. Overall, this important core area of protected lands provides a critical role as a safe haven for native species in preserving biological diversity.

TRAILS

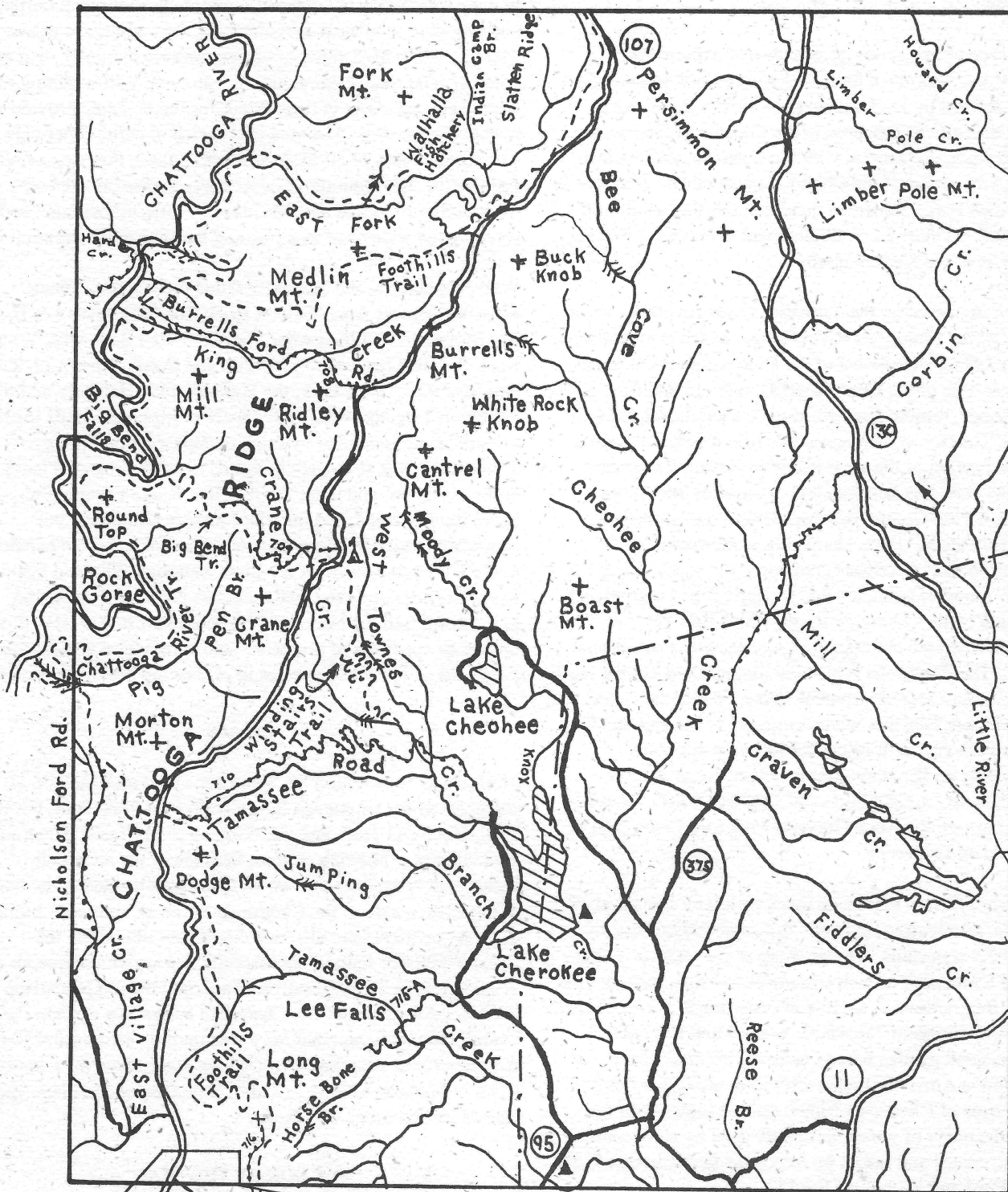
Maintained trails within the Tamassee Quad area include segments of the Chattooga River Trail, East Fork Trail, Foothills Trail, Big Bend Trail, and the Winding Stairs Trail. The trails are evidence of the rich cultural heritage of the area, that includes at least three old Indian town sites located at the base of the eastern side of the Chattooga River escarpment. Linked to these town sites are also two significant old trails: the Upper Cherokee Path to the Overhill Towns, which ascends the Winding Stairs Trail to Burrells Ford, and the old Nicholson Ford Road that crosses the Chattooga Ridge in a gap west of Dodge Mountain, and that once was used by settlers and Native Americans traveling between Oconee Station and the Chattooga River at Nicholson Ford, just above the Cherokee village site known as Chattooga Old Town.

A LOOK AT THE MAP

A portion of the Chattooga River watershed lies in the northwest corner of the Tamassee Quad. The watershed is delineated by the rim of Chattooga Ridge, and stretches along a string of mountains running north by northwest from the lower left hand corner of the quad to just above the Walhalla Fish Hatchery at the top of the quad in the middle, and encompasses that part of the Chattooga basin across the Rock Gorge and Ellicott

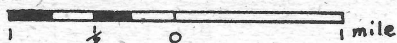
TAMASSEE QUADRANGLE

map drawn by Buzz Williams.



Oconee State Park

SCALE



LEGEND

State Highway		Stream	
County Road		Waterfall	
Forest Road		Campground	
Trail		Indian Village	

Tamassee Quad

Rock Wilderness Area to the top left hand corner of the quad in northeast Georgia, just below the North Carolina line. State Highway 107 roughly follows the spine of the Chattooga Ridge escarpment and runs down from the north, until sloughing off southward into the Village Creek community and passing Oconee State Park en route to Walhalla.

To the south, between Long Mountain and Chattooga Ridge, lie the headwaters of the Chauga River at Village Creek. Following Chattooga Ridge to the northeast, you will find a myriad of small branches and creeks falling precipitously from Chattooga Ridge toward the southeast and down some of the steepest, most rugged and biologically diverse country in the Southern Blue Ridge Escarpment.

At the base of the escarpment, headwater streams converge to form Cheohee, Knox, Townes and Tamassee Creeks, which flow through a plain where Cherokee villages once flourished. These streams combine with others flowing from the north to form the Little River, which then flows into the Keowee River near Old Fort Prince George, a frontier fort dating to the mid 1700s that once guarded the gateway to the Cherokee Nation at Keowee Village, just across the river. Highway 11, also known as the Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway, cuts off the corner of the Tamassee Quad at the Tamassee DAR School.

At the extreme northeastern corner of the quad are Howard and Limber Pole Creeks, which flow into Lake Jocassee below Duke Energy's Bad Creek pump storage area and lower Whitewater Falls. Highway 130 traverses this sector, and comes from the town of Salem that is located about five miles to the south, and just north on Highway 11 from the DAR School. To the north and just over into the Cashiers Quad, Highway 130 converges with Highway NC 281 from the left coming from the Walhalla Fish Hatchery on Highway 107. NC 281 continues on past Upper Whitewater Falls, crossing the Thompson and Horsepasture Rivers and eventually connecting with Highway 64 between the towns of Cashiers and Toxaway, North Carolina.

THE CHATTOOGA WATERSHED IN THE TAMASSEE QUAD

The sector of the Chattooga River basin represented on the Tamassee Quad is truly spectacular. The river crosses the northwest corner of the quad and runs through the lower southeastern third of the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area. The wilderness boundary runs just west of Chattooga Ridge at the top of the quad, and down a spur of Ellicott Mountain called Slatten Ridge, which separates Indian Camp Creek from the East Fork of the Chattooga River near Highway 107. The wilderness area boundary then runs down to the Walhalla Fish Hatchery, where it crosses the East Fork just below the Chattooga Picnic Area that was built around 1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The boundary then follows the hatchery access road until it reaches a gap on a spur of

Medlin Mountain very near Chattooga Ridge, where it turns to follow the spine along Medlin Mountain up to its summit at 3,141 feet, then descending to the Chattooga River below Spoonauger Creek and Spoonauger Falls. Here, the wilderness area boundary follows the river downstream along the state line between South Carolina and Georgia for about ¼ mile, until it reaches Harden Creek coming in from the Georgia side approximately ¼ mile above Burrells Ford. The boundary then climbs a ridge up Bee Bait Mountain to the western edge of the quad. Following the map boundary, it turns due north across Harden Creek and over the shoulder of Red Side Mountain, splitting the Georgia side of Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area to the northwest corner of the quad. From that corner the quad runs due east back into South Carolina, crossing the river just above its confluence with Bad Creek and just below Ellicott Rock and the state line with North Carolina, then across Bad Creek and along the north side of Fork Mountain (3,294 feet), and across Indian Camp Branch and back to Slatten Ridge.

The Burrells Ford Road (FS 708) turns off Highway 107 on the north side of Ridley Mountain and runs west crossing King Creek and follows it to Burrells Ford. The road runs about ½ mile south of the wilderness boundary. Two "roadless areas" as defined by the Forest Service, called Ellicott Rock I (300 acres) and Ellicott Rock II (530 acres) have been recommended by the Forest Service to congress as extensions to Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area, and would expand the wilderness area toward Burrells Ford Road in the south and towards Highway 107 to the east.

The East Fork of the Chattooga heads up at Mulky Gap in North Carolina near the intersection of Highway 107 and the Bull Pen Road. It flows down the west side of Chattooga Ridge, crossing under the road and back again at Sloan Bridge, then flowing southwest beneath Slatten Ridge and down to the Walhalla Fish Hatchery where it converges with Indian Camp Branch at the edge of Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area. Here at the Chattooga Picnic Area, the East Fork flows through one of the last remaining patches of old growth Hemlock/White Pine forests left in the Chattooga River watershed. From the hatchery the East Fork plunges west through rugged wilderness, between the steep slopes of Fork Mountain to the north and Medlin Mountain to the south, and finds its way to the Chattooga about two miles north of Burrells Ford. The 2.4 mile East Fork Trail that follows the East Fork of the Chattooga from the Walhalla Fish Hatchery to the main Chattooga offers a great hike through a botanical feast for the senses. Here a diverse array of habitats ranging from shaded spray zones, rock outcrops, White pine forests, rich coves, and Canadian hemlock forests provide habitat for what L. L. Gaddy calls "One of the most diverse and significant natural areas in the northwestern portion of South Carolina." Dr. Gaddy, in his book A Naturalist's Guide to the Southern Blue Ridge Front, has identified three species in the East Fork that have not been recorded anywhere else in

Tamassee Quad

South Carolina, including the Large-Flowered Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), Fort Mountain Sedge (*Carex amplisquama*) and Wood's Sedge (*Carex woodi*).

Some historians believe an old Indian trail followed the East Fork from a Cherokee village called Kanuga on Indian Camp Branch, to the Chattooga and a ford about ½ mile downstream of the confluence with the East Fork. Documentation for this trail comes from an old map drawn in 1761 by John Stuart, then British Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

The Foothills Trail coming from Sloan Bridge crosses the Walhalla Fish Hatchery access road not far from Highway 107 at an elevation of 2,380 ft. From a small parking lot here, the trail leads 3.3 miles across Medlin Mountain to the Chattooga River Trail, joining it very near the parking lot at Burrells Ford. This section of the Foothills Trail traverses through some high and dry oak-pine forest and has some good views.

The Chattooga River Trail, going to the right from the intersection with the Foothills Trail, leads about a mile through the Ellicott Rock Wilderness and descends to the river where it intersects the trail going up to Spoonauger Falls. One mile further is the confluence of the East Fork and the main Chattooga. Ellicott Rock is another 1.8 miles to the north, just beyond the edge of the Tamassee quad and just below the intersection with the Bad Creek Trail to the right and the Ellicott Rock Trail going left across the river into Georgia.

From the intersection of the Foothills Trail and the Chattooga River Trail going downstream, the two trails share the same tread. Downstream about 1/2 mile, the Foothills/Chattooga River Trail crosses the Burrells Ford Road just above a parking lot. From here the trail leads to and crosses King Creek. A spur to the left takes you to King Creek Falls.

The Chattooga River flowing from Burrells Ford through the Rock Gorge is at the heart of Chattooga back country. The small mountain stream has grown into a mountain river worthy of the name. It laces itself back and fourth between steep spurs off of Mill Mountain, Round Top, and Chattooga Ridge in South Carolina, and Rand Mountain and Big Mountain in Georgia, until flattening out near Lick Log Creek and Old Nicholson Ford. The Chattooga drops on the average of about 50 feet per mile between Burrells Ford and Lick Log Creek at the bottom southwest corner of the quad. But at Big Bend Falls and within

the Rock Gorge, the river falls over sheer drops and down narrow sluiceways between large boulders and near vertical rock faces forming some of the best whitewater in the southeast.

The 2,332-acre Big Mountain Roadless Area is bounded by the border of the Sumter National Forest at the river, and runs towards Chattooga Ridge and the Big Bend Road. When combined with adjacent roadless areas in Georgia across from the Rock Gorge, along with the Ellicott Rock I and II Roadless Areas and the 2,999 acre Bee Cove Roadless Area across Highway 107 at the Walhalla Fish Hatchery, this area represents approximately 7,000 acres of roadless areas that are eligible for wilderness designation. Roadless areas are critical because roadlessness, or the inherent lack of access, results in restricted use and therefore preserves wildness. Powerful special interest groups are constantly pushing for access into roadless areas with demands for more trails, access roads, timber roads, and access for whitewater boating and trout fishing.



Showy Orchids are one of the exceptional wildflowers growing in the Tamassee quad's Brevard Zone soils.

Access to this section of the Chattooga watershed is by the Foothills/Chattooga River Trail from the north, which follows the river down from Burrells Ford past the King Creek Trail. Then, after 2.5 miles the trail intersects with the Big Bend Trail coming in from the left, about 3 miles from Cherry Hill Camp Ground over on Highway 107. At mile 3.3 from Burrells Ford, the trail reaches a path down to Big Bend Falls. Below Big Bend, the trail climbs around Round Top Mountain and back down to the river where a small stream joins the Chattooga from the Georgia side, coming from Salt Trough Gap between Big Mountain and Rand Mountain. At 5.5 miles below Burrells Ford is Simms Field, that was formerly accessed by early settlers and loggers from the Big Bend Road. The trail then ascends to the

side of a steep ridge and makes a sweep high above and around the Rock Gorge, and then between two hills for another 1.8 miles to an intersection. Here at Lick Log Creek, the Foothills Trail splits off from the Chattooga River Trail and leads up the Old Nicholson Ford Road past a couple of parking lots near Thrift Lake, and then left up towards Dodge Mountain to Chattooga Ridge, where the Tamassee Road intersects Highway 107. The total distance from the Chattooga River at Lick Log to Chattooga Ridge is 2.3 miles. From Lick Log Creek, the Chattooga River Trail continues off the quad map, on down the Chattooga from Lick Log Creek 3.7 miles to highway 28.

The Big Bend Falls/Rock Gorge area can also be accessed by driving the Big Bend Road (Forest Service Road 709) from

Tamassee Quad

Cherry Hill Camp Ground to an intersection with the Big Bend Trail closer to the river. The Upper Cherokee Path to the Overhill Towns passed near the intersection of the Big Bend Road and Highway 107 at Cherry Hill Campground.

CULTURAL HISTORY

It is easy to imagine the route taken by early settlers over the old Cherokee trail that led from villages at Cheohee Valley up the Winding Stairs Trail to Cherry Hill. Several old cemeteries in the area give testimony of the migration of settlers from the base of the Blue Ridge Escarpment to the hard life in the mountains. At Burrells Cemetery, one finds three graves in a row dated 1901, 1902 and 1903. These graves all mark newborn children of the Burrell family who probably died of scarlet fever. Moody Springs Picnic Area, located just above Cherry Hill campground, was named for a settler that once lived in Moody Cove where Lake Cheohee is today. Many settlers like Moody migrated up the nearby Winding Stairs Trail to establish new homes at Cherry Hill, while others like Barak Norton and family followed the Cherokee trail on up Crane Creek and across Chattooga Ridge to the west of Ridley Mountain, then down and across King Creek where it led to Burrells Ford. The Nortons continued on over Carey Gap, up Hicks Creek and through the Glades to Horse Cove, and then to Whiteside Cove. The Nortons obtained land directly from the Indians and became the first settlers in the Chattooga headwaters.

The cultural history of the Chattooga watershed is linked directly to the communities that flourished at the base of the Blue Ridge Escarpment via these old pathways. In the mid-1700s, the Cherokee had three villages that were located in Cheohee Valley, in Tamassee near the confluence of Tamassee Creek and Cheohee Creek below present day Cherokee Lake,

and Cheohee further up Cheohee Creek, and another village at the confluence of Townes and Knox Creeks. A frontier trading post known as Oconee Station was just across the ridge on Oconee Creek, near a village called Aconee that was situated at the base of Station Mountain (just off the map, on the Walhalla quad). Here, a trading path led up Station Cove to present day Oconee State Park, and then up Village Creek and branching off to the right onto the Nicholson Ford Road, or left towards the

Lower Cherokee Path at Earls Ford. In the late 1700s Oconee Station was strategically located to establish a footing in the colonial deer skin trade network by dint of its position at the intersection of the trading trails that came down the Upper Cherokee Trail through Cheohee Valley, or from across the Chattooga via the Station Cove connections to the lower Cherokee Path to the Overhill Towns that were across the river at Earls Ford.

It was near the village of Tamassee where Revolutionary War General Andrew Pickens engaged the Cherokee in what has been called the "Ring Fight," which occurred in a cane break on Tamassee Creek on August 12, 1775. The legend goes that the Americans were being harassed by the Cherokee, who had sided with the British. In retaliation, Pickens led a force against the marauding Cherokee and found his small detachment of about 30 militiamen surrounded by the Cherokee, who were masters of the "ambush." Pickens was well known and respected as a wise and worthy opponent by the Cherokee, who called him "Skiangusta," or

the Wizard Owl. True to form, Pickens used his knowledge of his enemy and retreated into the cane break for cover. There, he lit a fire in a circle around his men. The Cherokee warriors took the noise made by exploding cane as the sound of many guns and retreated, thinking they were vastly outnumbered. Whether this actually happened is a matter of speculation based on sketchy accounts, but it makes a great story. This much we do know: General Pickens eventually settled near the site of the



Lee Falls on Tamassee Creek is one of the most beautiful waterfalls in the Tamassee quadrangle. photo by Rich Stevenson

Tamassee Quad

Ring Fight at Tamassee Village, and lived out his days in the homeland of his old enemies. Pickens died in 1817 in a rocking chair on his porch at Tamassee.

The Treaty of 1816 sealed the fate of the few remaining Cherokee in the Tamassee area when they ceded all the land in northwest South Carolina to the United States. This was the period when the Nortons, Burrells, and other settlers used the old trails to settle the isolated coves in the Chattooga River watershed.

The old trails were also used by early botanists who came to study the rich flora of the Blue Ridge Escarpment. These include Andre Michaux in 1787, and William Bartram in 1775. Michaux had been sent by France to explore the headwaters of the Savannah River and bring back plants for the Park of Rambouillet. It was Michaux who discovered the Oconee Bell in the Jocassee Gorges in 1787, and then went up the Whitewater River to Chattooga Ridge and circled through the headwaters and over to the Little Tennessee River. Michaux then returned into the Chattooga River watershed through Rabun Gap, crossed a ridge at Court House Gap, went down Warwoman Creek, across the river at Earls Ford, and over Oconee Mountain back through Tamassee Village.

William Bartram came over Oconee Mountain from Keowee Village and across Village Creek, and then on to Earls Ford on his journey cataloging the native vegetation and making valuable notes on the Cherokee lifestyle. The romanticized account of his journey appears in his book The Travels of William Bartram, and inspired many great poets of his time.

There are many other noted travelers, Indian agents, and soldiers that journeyed through Chattooga country via trails through the valleys of Oconee Creek, Cheohee Valley, and the Chauga River headwaters on the east side of Chattooga Ridge. So many, in fact, that it would take volumes to do the subject justice. Suffice it to say that this "gateway" to the mountains is undeniably important in the history of the Chattooga River watershed.

No article about this area would be complete without a word about the steep slopes of the Chattooga escarpment, with its wondrous concentration of beautiful waterfalls and the biological diversity that exists on this seam between the high mountains and the foothills. High average rainfall—up to 80 inches per year—combined with the fact that this area was never glaciated, has created an environment for the continued existence of flora that was pushed down the Appalachian Mountain chain by the last Ice Age. Rich coves, and spray zones below cascading falls, are ideally suited for many rare plants. Soils also play an important role in the evolution of this area's flora. For example, the Brevard Zone, which runs across the Station Cove and Tamassee Creek drainages, has very rich circumneutral soils originating from a parent rock

called actinolite. The Brevard Zone soils stimulate the most productive wildflower habitat in the state of South Carolina. The Station Cove forest along Station Creek, very near the old trading post, yields annual displays of Showy Orchids, Blue Cohosh, the rare Walking Fern, Bloodroot, Canadian Violets, and a host of other rare wildflowers and sedges. Lee Falls on Tamassee Creek is one of the most beautiful falls in the area, and is equally as rich in flora as Station Cove.

Other falls of note along the Tamassee quad's escarpment area are Hidden Falls on Tamassee Creek, Miuka Falls on the West Fork of Townes Creek, and Secret Falls on Crane Creek. These waterfalls are accessible from the Winding Stairs Trail, while another named Bee Cove Falls is accessible from a Forest Service road off of Highway 107 above the Walhalla Fish Hatchery.

As was the case with the cultural history of the area, the interesting places and points of natural history are abundant within the Tamassee quad. There are the beautiful falls at Lick Log Creek, with the lower drop falling almost straight into the Chattooga; there are the federally listed Small Whorled Pagonias on King Creek, which also harbors one of the last populations of native Brook Trout in South Carolina; and, there are the Blue Ghost Fireflies that appear only for a short period at Spoonauger Falls in April. A separate history could be written about the gold and soapstone mines above Cheohee Valley. Was this the gold that the ruthless Spanish explorer Hernando De Soto sought in 1540? Did he come up the Winding Stairs Trail? Is Cheohee or Tamassee the lost village of Xuala mentioned in De Soto's journals? These are all interesting questions that can only be answered by research and field study. This spring, go out in the Tamassee quad and begin to discover its wonders.

Resources to enjoy the Tamassee quad are: a United States Geological Survey Tamassee Quadrangle map; a map of Oconee County, South Carolina; The Waterfalls of South Carolina, by Benjamin Brooks and Tim Cook; A Naturalist's Guide to the Southern Blue Ridge Front, by L. L. Gaddy; Hiking Trails of the Southern Nantahala Wilderness, Ellicott Rock Wilderness, Chattooga National Wild and Scenic River, by Tim Homan; Guide to the Foothills Trail by the Foothills Trail Conference; and, a copy of Margaret Mills Seaborn's Map of Cherokee Towns (available at the Oconee County Library in Walhalla, SC). Several good history books to read are Bartrams Travels; Andre Michaux's Journeys in Oconee County; Benjamin Hawkin's Journeys Through Oconee County, by Margaret Mills Seaborn; and "Floristic and Vascular Survey of the Chattooga River Gorge," by David M. DuMond (1970).

Watershed Update

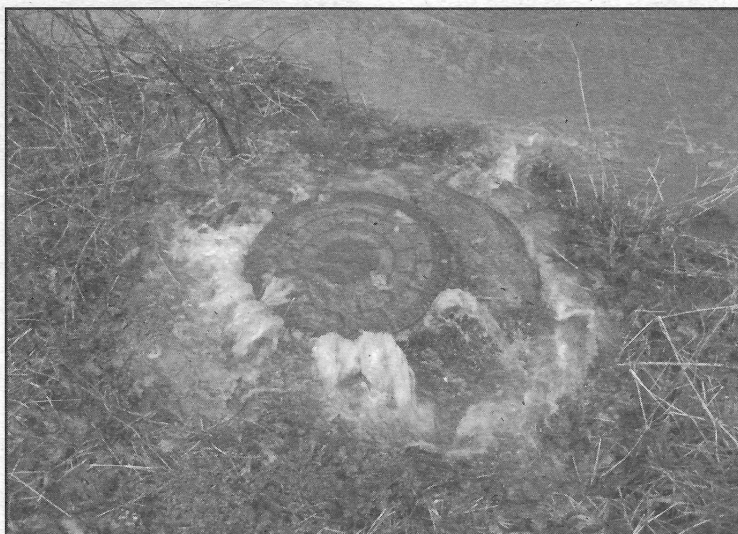
STEKOA CREEK REPORT

The Chattooga Conservancy was on the scene to discover another major sewage spill in the Stekoa Creek watershed that occurred during a recent rainy day in March. The site was at Scott Creek, at a troublesome area of numerous sewer line crossings and low-lying manholes that are in the stream bed, behind the Rabun County Civic Center and about ¼ mile before Scott Creek flows into Stekoa Creek. This particular sewage spill was caused by rain water infiltrating the sewage collection system by way of various breaks in the lines, thus causing the sewer lines to fill beyond capacity and explode out of the collection system through a manhole cover. The fountain of raw sewage continued flowing for hours, subsiding as the rain run-off diminished.

Is this sewage spill just another travesty for Stekoa Creek—business as usual for over 30 years in this dirty waterway, that is also infamous as a polluted, major tributary to the National Wild & Scenic Chattooga River? Perhaps not, as times might be changing. Hear this: in response to the contemporary water quality data assembled by the Chattooga Conservancy's water sampling program in Stekoa Creek, the Georgia Environmental

Protection Division's (EPD) compliance and enforcement division recently stated that they are going to "get back on track" with their agency's charge to help improve Stekoa's water quality. At the same time, the EPD has categorized this most recent sewage incident as a "major spill," which means that in excess of 10,000 gallons of raw sewage was leaked. This will, in turn, prompt a "notice of violation," issued from the EPD to the City of Clayton. Further, the EPD says they expect to see a response from the City of Clayton that will include a corrective action plan for fixing the sewage collection infrastructure, and a time line for implementing this plan. There has also been talk in the EPD about issuing a new "consent order" for cleaning up Stekoa Creek, which would spell out specific action steps that the City of Clayton would have to implement under deadlines as well as threat of fines.

Meanwhile, on the bright side, there is growing support at Clayton City Hall for starting the process of cleaning up Stekoa Creek. For instance, the city worked in cooperation with the Chattooga Conservancy to apply for a 319(h) program grant to help work on several issues that could improve water quality



Fountains of raw sewage flowing out of a manhole, then directly in to Scott Creek (top right) near its confluence with Stekoa Creek; March 2008.

in Stekoa Creek, and some funds will be forthcoming in the fall of 2008. The city has also upgraded their law enforcement authority in the areas of soil and erosion control inspections, and code compliance for ground disturbing activities. Concerning the latter, the Clayton City Council also recently approved a moratorium on building in the Stekoa Creek floodplain, that is in effect until the city abides by the requirements of their own flood plain ordinance. In addition, the Clayton City Council is seeking resources and has applied for help in addressing erosion and sedimentation, flood plain encroachment, municipal water loss, and the failing sewer infrastructure. So while Stekoa Creek is just as dirty as ever, there are some new attitudes at city hall that call for acknowledging the significance of Stekoa Creek's polluted waters, and moving forward right now with solutions.

Beginning this spring the Chattooga Conservancy, in cooperation with the U. S. Forest Service, will start collecting water samples at the confluence of Stekoa Creek and the Chattooga River, and at several more points on the river. The purpose here is to update water quality data while determining pollution levels in the Chattooga River that can be attributed to Stekoa Creek. We will also continue weekly water sampling at

numerous sites in the Stekoa Creek watershed within or near Clayton city limits, and keep the work of improving Stekoa's water quality at the forefront of our programs.

FOCUS ON FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT

The Chattooga Conservancy recently organized a meeting in Clayton, GA, that included representatives from Georgia Environmental Protection Division, officials from Rabun County and the City of Clayton, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Rabun County Chapter of Trout Unlimited, to explore a plan for restoring the ecological integrity of Stekoa Creek. Flood plain management was a major item on the agenda, since much of the sediment in Stekoa Creek has been a direct result of filling in the creek's flood plain, and we expected additional flood plain filling to begin in the near future.

One or two quick looks at Stekoa Creek's flood plain reveals a sorry state of affairs, ranging from concrete embankments on areas of the creek proper, to piles of debris, fill dirt, and rocks in other places, to mountains of packed dirt upon which sit

Watershed Update

developments. Just how did Stekoa's flood plain get to be so abused?

In the early 1980s the City of Clayton withdrew from the National Flood Plain Insurance Program (NFIP), largely due to regulatory requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA, the agency that administers the NFIP) that mandated local flood plain protection ordinances in order to get flood plain insurance. The city quickly realized that without flood plain insurance they would be unable to get grants and loans. So in 1985, the city resolved to commission a re-study of their flood plain maps, and complete a mitigation plan for damage done during the years when the city had withdrawn from the NFIP. This study was completed in December of 1987, and concluded that mitigation measures would be too expensive to lower then-present flood levels, and that a new floodway zone should be established. By early 1989, Clayton had complied with the minimum requirements to be reinstated in the NFIP, with the following statement by FEMA: "However, in light of the city's past performance in the program and the highly detrimental flood plain development which occurred during the period of the city's withdrawal from the NFIP, we will continue to monitor Clayton's flood plain management program closely to assure its continued compliance." Unfortunately FEMA did not follow up, and the City of Clayton did not enforce its flood plain protection ordinance as required by FEMA.



With Stekoa Creek at flood stage in the foreground, this image shows the as yet unexplained flood plain filling project on Highway 441 in Rabun County known as the "Duvall site."

Enter Clayton Mayor Tom Ramey, whose business "Ramey Enterprises" began in January 2008 filling the flood plain at the confluence of Stekoa and Needy Creeks, within the floodway area as defined by FEMA, which is a critical unfilled flood plain at the north end of Clayton. Having just researched this issue, the Chattooga Conservancy questioned if Mayor Ramey was in compliance with the city's flood plain protection ordinance

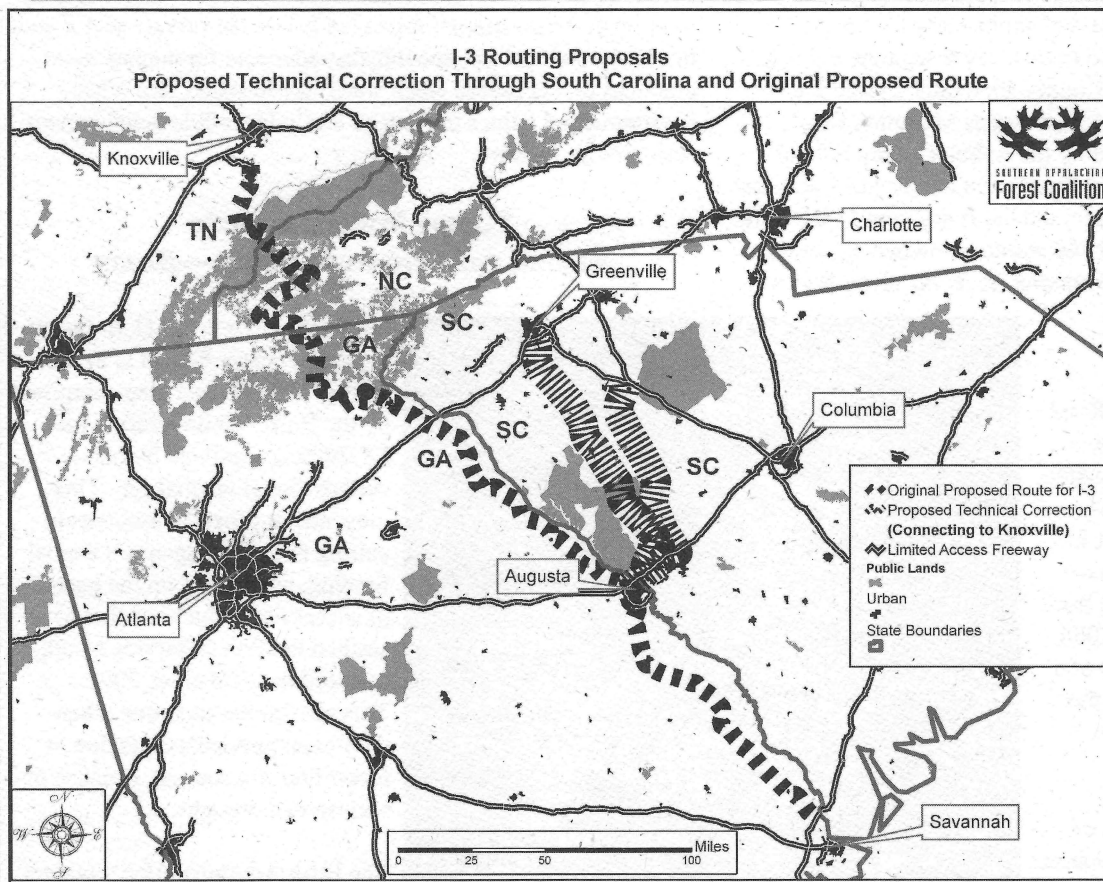


The "arm pit" of the Stekoa Creek watershed: dumping fill in the flood plain; sewage lines in the creek; and, flood-prone manholes. This site is at the crossing of Marsengill & Shadyside St. in Clayton.

and requested a copy of the permit for this activity, as required by the ordinance. After studying the flood plain ordinance, city officials agreed that the city must approve a permit for filling in the flood plain, and that no filling should occur in the "floodway" as defined by FEMA. There was no such permit on record for the activity in question. Thus, the Chattooga Conservancy delivered a formal letter to the city requesting immediate enforcement of the ordinance by issuing a stop work order. On February 1st, the city marshal issued a stop-work order for Ramey Enterprises' filling in the Stekoa Creek flood plain.

On February 12th, at the regular meeting of the Clayton City Council, the Chattooga Conservancy requested that the city impose a moratorium on all filling in the Stekoa Creek flood plain. The measure passed by unanimous vote. It was also agreed to send the city marshal to a training course on flood plain management sponsored by the State of Georgia. Here, the state trainers recommended changing Clayton's flood plain ordinance that prohibited all filling in the floodway, putting forth the justification that such a prohibition would invite a "takings" lawsuit based on the argument that private property development rights were being taken away by this development restriction. The city council abided, and essentially created an opportunity for floodway filling projects if the project's engineering studies could claim no increase in water levels during base flood events. Meanwhile, the Chattooga Conservancy will be studying Rabun County's flood plain protection ordinance, which would address the greater Stekoa Creek watershed as well as numerous streams in the Tallulah River watershed, to initiate the process of enforcement.

Watershed Update



Politicos are attempting to switch the proposed I-3 corridor out of Georgia and into South Carolina—where it's not wanted either. map created by Hugh Irwin

INTERSTATE 3 NOW TARGETING SOUTH CAROLINA

In classic NIMBY (“not in my back yard!”) fashion, U.S. Representative Paul Broun (R-GA) moved in early January 2008 to change the proposed Interstate 3 corridor route out of northeast Georgia and into neighboring South Carolina. The controversial I-3 project, which was revealed to the public in 2005 (see *Chattooga Quarterly* summer 2005), is a proposal to establish a new interstate highway from Savannah to Knoxville by way of northeast Georgia, and possibly through the Chattooga River watershed via Georgia state highway 441. Since its inception, public concern has led to widespread opposition in northeast Georgia and western North Carolina against building a new interstate highway in this area. This opposition has been fueled by well-founded concerns about the environmental destruction that would accompany interstate highway construction, as well as other ill effects such as the potential for radioactive cargo that could travel this route between the Savannah River Site and Oakridge National Laboratory.

Meanwhile, I-3 was allocated \$1.32 million of tax payer’s money for study by the Federal Highway Administration

(FHA), and the project receded into the FHA’s massive bureaucracy for further consideration. All the while, citizens have continued to oppose the new interstate, calling for reallocating the \$1.32 million study funds to a number of other worthy federal expenditures, and canceling any further activity on the project.

As of the winter of 2008, the FHA’s I-3 study was not yet underway. Enter now Rep. Broun’s proposal for making a “technical correction” to the interstate route, to re-direct it through South Carolina. Rep. Broun’s “technical correction” would shift the I-3 study to address possible routes from Augusta, GA, through Greenwood, Clinton and Greenville, SC, possibly utilizing U. S. 72 and 25, and from there onward in

a northwesterly direction towards Knoxville. . The proposed SC route would have the interstate plough right through family farms, prime hunting territories, historic areas, rural countryside, and then through upstate South Carolina’s ecologically unique Blue Ridge Escarpment area.

The Chattooga Conservancy was one of the first groups to oppose the construction of I-3 altogether, and since 2005 we’ve been tracking this issue. Once we learned of this recent “technical correction” proposal, the Chattooga Conservancy immediately alerted SC organizations about the switch. Upstate Forever, a Greenville-based conservation group with significant clout, has now joined the opposition to the South Carolina route in taking a strong position against the I-3 project. We urge all of our South Carolina members to contact U.S. Rep. Gresham Barrett (R-SC) and voice your opposition to the unneeded and destructive I-3 project in South Carolina, and anywhere else.

LAND SWAP: NET LOSS OF PUBLIC LAND IN THE CHATTOOGA WATERSHED

The U.S. Forest Service recently proposed a land swap that would result in a 234 acre net loss of national forest land in

Watershed Update

Rabun County, GA. It's called the "multi-party exchange," and the Forest Service wants to trade away 6 separate tracts of national forest land in Rabun County, including 2 large tracts totaling about 237 acres on the East Boggs Mountain Road that are slated for management by the Rabun County School Board for "future school system expansion and needs." Another sizeable tract of 70 acres on the trade list is adjacent to the (now closed) Rabun County landfill and would be owned by Rabun County, while the remaining 3 smaller tracts lay along highway 441 and would be deeded to a private landowner.

Trading the Boggs Mountain Road tracts out of the national forest system would continue the transfer of land in this specific area that has been ongoing over the last few years. Here, recent history shows that a large tract was removed from the national forest system in 2000, and another exchange in 2002 of a 45-acre tract that now houses the Rabun County Middle School.

Around Boggs Mountain, the northern portion of the area is of particular interest due to its location on some very steep slopes adjacent to Stekoa Creek, which is a well known and very polluted waterway in Rabun County that is also major tributary to the Chattooga River. In anticipation of the land trade going through, the Chattooga Conservancy has suggested to the Rabun County School Board that placing a conservation easement on these steep slopes would be appropriate, as this could protect this sensitive area from the types of development that could easily cause more erosion, sedimentation, and fecal pollution into the already damaged Stekoa Creek.

Future management of tract next to the county landfill is also of concern because of the creeks and springs in the area and its current value in the community as wildlife habitat and for seasonal hunting grounds. Meanwhile, the three tracts next to highway 441 (totaling about 17 acres altogether) slated to enter the private sector might also wind up in commercial developments that could easily contribute to the spreading sprawl along the highway 441 corridor, further detracting from the scenic beauty of Rabun County. With the reality of all the development pressures continuing to mount on Rabun County's private land base, we urge folks to follow up on the anticipated

transfer of these national forest lands into the private sector and/or county ownership. Specifically, advocate for management practices that conserve clean water, green space, and other environmental values that are so easily lost while development activities go forward.

FOREST SERVICE BUDGET FACING THE CHOPPING BLOCK—AGAIN



The Forest Service's budget has been slashed by more than one-third since 2001, with this year's proposed cuts inclusive of fire prevention and fire preparedness.

Yet another cut in the U. S. Forest Service's yearly budget is in the works, if the budget plan submitted by the Bush Administration for FY 2009 is approved by our congressional lawmakers. This most recent proposal amounts to cutting 8% of the agency's annual funding, and comes on the heels of successive reductions that have slashed the Forest Service's budget by more than 1/3 since 2001. This also comes at a time when the Forest Service's costs due to forest fires are soaring, because of widespread drought.

The Bush Administration's budget plan could eliminate nearly 10% of the agency's work force nationwide, and force cutbacks in road and trail maintenance, law enforcement, recreation (including core services such as trash collection and restroom maintenance), research, state and private forestry program assistance, and other non-fire related programs. Dollars would also be cut from fire prevention and preparedness,

hazardous fuels reduction, and other precautionary fire operations—all potentially useful programs that could reduce the risk of future wildfires. Meanwhile, the agency's line item for outright wildfire fighting would see a significant increase.

This proposed new budget raises great concerns about the job our federal government is doing as caretaker of this nation's public lands. Over the past decade, priorities have shifted away from fire prevention, road maintenance, wildlife management, recreation, and associated amenities that benefit millions of visitors to our national forest system, and towards the work of fire fighting. And unless it's changed by congress, the Bush Administration's newest financial plan for the U. S. Forest Service will seriously undercut the agency's mission to "Care For the Land & Serve the People."

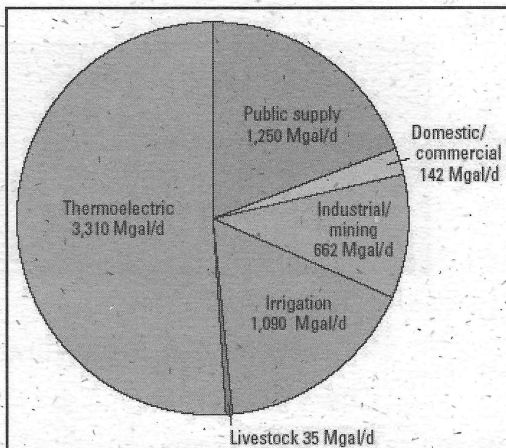
Watershed Update

GEORGIA WATER STRONG PROTECTIONS STILL NEEDED

Despite the recent rain, Georgia is still experiencing one of the worst droughts in history. This drought is threatening river flows and dependant aquatic species, clean drinking water supplies, and the very foundations of large sectors of commerce. In spite of the much-touted Georgia Water Plan that was passed during this year's session of the Georgia Statehouse, the state still needs strong protections for water resources as well as binding regulations that would ensure wise water use.

Before and during the 2008 legislative session, the Chattooga Conservancy worked with the Georgia Water Coalition, which is a statewide network of over 155 organizations, to promote improvements to the final draft of the state water plan. These improvements focused on: establishing regional water planning areas based on watershed boundaries and governed by locally appointed councils; real requirements for water conservation and efficiency; enforceable prohibitions against interbasin water transfers; and, requiring that reservoirs be fully utilized for water supply needs (as opposed to amenity use). However, both the Georgia House and Senate passed resolutions adopting the Georgia Water Council Water Plan without incorporating these reasonable improvements, with the exception of requiring that new reservoirs be surrounded by green space buffer zones. As it stands now, the plan has regional water planning districts drawn along political boundaries instead of natural watershed boundaries; no protection for donor or downstream communities against interbasin water transfers; and, no requirements for water conservation.

Meanwhile, at the local level, the Chattooga Conservancy applauds the Rabun County Commissioners for passing a water resources resolution that endorses many of the conservation measures put forth by the Georgia Water Coalition. We also encourage everyone to keep working together to secure strong protections for Georgia's water resources.



Water use figures for Georgia in 2000 show over 50% going to thermoelectric power production (nuclear, oil, and coal energy).

BIRD WALK *May 23rd*

BIRD WALK

FRIDAY, MAY 23RD AT 8 A.M.

Join expert birder Jack Johnston on the Chattooga Conservancy's annual bird watching expedition.

Jack will lead a short hike into the woods to identify Neotropical migratory birds, sharing his wealth of knowledge about bird songs and distinctive markings to identify the birds heard or seen on the expedition.

Meet at 8 a.m. sharp at the **INGLES PARKING LOT ON HWY. 441** in Clayton, Georgia. Gather at the back of the parking lot, over on the side closest to the Community Bank building.

Bring binoculars. For more info, call the Chattooga Conservancy at 706-782-6097.

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Many thanks to everyone who recently renewed their membership, joined, or donated goods or time to the Chattooga Conservancy. Your generous contributions will help us continue to work on all of the important conservation issues facing the watershed.

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Winter / Spring 2008

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Individual: \$30 ☐

Group: \$50 ☐

Sponsor: \$75 ☐

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YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED

Chattooga Conservancy

P. O. Box 2008

Clayton, Georgia 30525

tel. (706) 782-6097 fax (706) 782-6098 info@chattoogariver.org www.chattoogariver.org

Purpose: To protect, promote and restore the natural ecological integrity of the Chattooga River watershed ecosystems; to ensure the viability of native species in harmony with the need for a healthy human environment; and to educate and empower communities to practice good stewardship on public and private lands.

Made Possible By:

Chattooga Conservancy Members
& Volunteers

Embrace-A-Stream Program,
National Trout Unlimited

Frances A. Close

The Springs Close Foundation

Lillian Smith Foundation

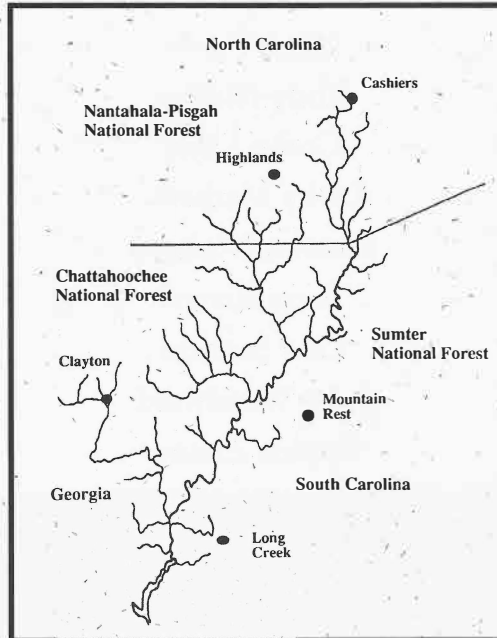
McClatchey Foundation

GA River Network

The Sapelo Foundation

National Forest Foundation

Recreational Equipment, Inc.



Goals:

Monitor the U.S. Forest Service's management of public forest lands in the watershed, and work cooperatively to develop a sound ecosystem initiative for the watershed

Educate the public

Promote public choice based on credible scientific information

Promote public land acquisition by the Forest Service within the watershed

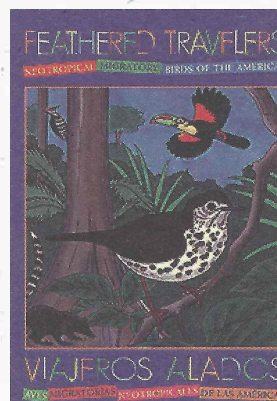
Protect remaining old growth and roadless areas

Promote sustainable communities

Promote conservation by honoring cultural heritage

Chattooga Conservancy
P. O. Box 2008
Clayton, GA 30525

**Bird Walk
MAY 23rd!
See p. 15
for details**



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Clayton, GA

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