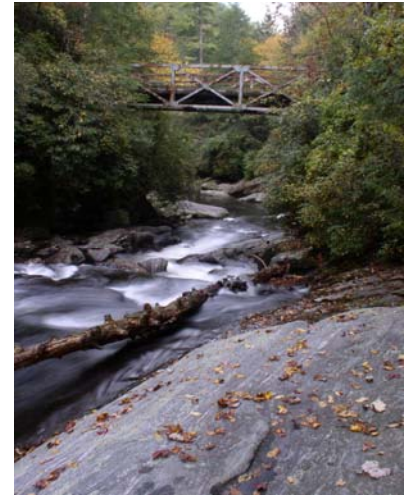


Are Our Rivers In Peril?

Upper Chattooga River

The US Forest Service reviewed six alternatives for recreational uses on the upper Chattooga River area and selected a preferred alternative that allows for restrictive boating. The agency is now in the process of sifting through thousands of public comments received to find some consensus in order to determine the final alternative. Early on J-MCA joined with the Friends of the Upper Chattooga in opposition to the proposal to remove the boating ban on this stretch of the river. Our opinion stands, that boating should not be added to this pristine area unless the USFS can assure proper management.



Tuckasegee River

The Tuckasegee River is threatened with over use by development pressures, the latest from the Legasus development, a 3,500 acre tract designed for 1,000 homes and golf course. Development plans were “grandfathered” in when Jackson County’s development ordinances were approved and consequently Legasus is negotiating a Development Agreement with the county. A number of concerned groups, including J-MCA, are allied in opposition because of the potentially huge environmental impact this large scale resort will have on the river and the Tuckasegee community.

Horsepasture River

The Horsepasture River has been nominated by the Dept. of Water Quality for Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) designation and 1,300 public comments were submitted to DWQ in response to this proposal. J-MCA has been actively participating in the hearing process and has taken the position that the headwaters area should remain in the current classification of High Quality water to allow some limited availability for wastewater discharge as long as water quality is not negatively impacted. Our position hinges on the lack of wastewater capacity in the Cashiers area and balancing public and environmental health. J-MCA fully supports ORW classification for other portions of the river. On November 13th the Environmental Management Commission met and revised the ORW proposal. Our recommendations were considered, but more efforts will be required during the 60 day comment period to address the Cashiers wastewater issue. J-MCA remains in close contact with Sen. John Snow’s office, the Cashiers Wastewater Task Force, Tuckasegee Water & Sewer Authority, and Environmental North Carolina on this issue.

A Special Message from the J-MCA Administrator

This has certainly been a turbulent financial year for everyone. No one feels it more than the non-profits. Yes, our contributions are down this year and we worry about how long it will last. So, I ask you to please remember J-MCA as this year closes and support us in our mission to protect this very unique and important environment. We understand how essential it is to conserve the forests and rivers in this special place and hope that you agree. The impact from letting this area decline will have a ripple effect that can extend even into surrounding states; we contain the headwaters to so many river basins, the life line to so many people.

Our annual family membership is only \$50. That breaks down to about \$4 per month. I ask you to seriously consider renewing your membership, to those who already renewed, thank you. If you appreciate this area, surely you can find it in your heart to give \$4, 5 or \$10 per month to help protect our mountain treasure? Our existence depends on it.

Thank you, Debbie

Lassiter