Before allowing general public to comment of this proposition, National Forest should have activated a mandatory pop-up window in “Know Before You Go” style that says “Know Before You Comment”, in which the prompt would require the audience to check mark and confirm that they are familiar with eBikes before blindly mouthing and blatantly discrediting the technology they know nothing about.

I have spent numerous evenings reading thousands of submitted letters on this topic. Toxicity levels of some content found on this thread are mountain high (gas mask is required to successfully survive a reading session). There is an incredible number of stories infested with disinformation. Those stories, the details and authenticity of which often tend to disappear into the chasm of history in the grand tradition of storytelling, are nothing but an attempt to ignite an internal debate and use the generated heat to rile up our community. Don't fall for this inflammatory attempt, it only nudges everyone into hating each other. We have seen an identical trend back in May when BLM, BOR, NPS and FWS filed their proposed rule for Secretary Order Nr 3376 on Regulations.gov, where thousands of identical text messages were submitted across all 4 threads. For your reference, those dictated messages are identical to the ones posted here. It is crystal clear this thread has been swarmed with copy pasted propaganda from righteous elitists in an attempt to influence elected officials into satisfying their ignorance. I urge the Department of the Agriculture and the National Forest Service to remain strong, with eyes wide open and gather light. Do not succumb under what appears to be a blazing attack, they are using blanks.

All this eBike hysteria is fueled by oppressive elitists who get an ego boost from kicking out and holding down individuals they do not relate with. You will never build yourself up by putting someone down! Cowards do that! Privileged trail users can be just as irresponsible and disrespectful. Just as there are more responsible and respectful bikers than irresponsible ones. Douchebaggery is not a quality that comes with a purchase of an eBike, I’ve checked my receipt. It is absurd that modern day people are stuck in a primitive mindset that feeds on disregard. It is such shame that there is an active restriction that people hypocritically propagate but have no valid arguments to back their words with. I personally, consider myself to be an open-minded person and gladly engage in a friendly debate with anyone who calls me out. In fact, I often encourage people to speak out. I believe that the quieter we are on these types of subjects the more open to interpretation others become. I even promise to keep my mouth shut and let people speak without interruption. To this date, none of the conversations I have had ended up in their favor.

While I find myself in a defensive position, it’s worth mentioning the elephant in the room. It is true that Class 1 eMountain Bikes are leaning towards the heavier side. My eBike for example is 49 pounds even. If you don’t know your range there is a possibility you will run out of battery, which leaves you with a heavier bike to pedal all the way back. Pedaling the bike is slightly harder, mostly noticeable when accelerating. Inactive mid-drive unit features a freewheel mechanism that allows me to spin the pedals as if I were on my regular mountain bike. The second weight related downside is maneuverability; the bike is slightly less nimble, which is a constant reminder and the key indication to me that handling in technical terrain and tight corners requires extra caution. Neither of these downs are a compelling reason to keep eBikes off single tracks. Remember, practice always beats theory. The more you practice your riding skills the better you get at taming your beast. Your body adapts and naturally stays in synergy with the bike. I encourage everyone who is in strong opposition to Class 1 eBikes, try one for yourself (friends don’t have to know of your atrocity). Your interpretation of what you think you know it is, is far from being accurate if you have no accurate data to work with. I promise you, the more you familiarize yourself with it, the more you realize it’s rather similar than different from a traditional one. Class 1 is not capable of self-propelling, there is physically no way you can engage a throttle and unleash all your mighty .75 horses! The concept of eBikes is easily misconceived when you let your biased imagination fill the missing details. Only the fact that you are initially required to pedal your eBike in order to activate the assist makes it fundamentally different from a motorized vehicle.

I have studied the Comparison of Environmental Impacts by IMBA, great report! I applaud their commitment to deliver a detailed research as accurate as possible, with facts based on direct evidence and not just confidence born on ignorance. In light of which I support the changes to the directives proposed by the National Forest with one objection. Allowing the Bridger-Teton continued autonomy to determine the most appropriate places for eBikes will be devastating. Agency wide, authoritarian employees like Linda Merigliano are pushing for tight controls over citizens on eBikes and refuses to adapt to a changing climate of users. This has to stop.

Objecting against Class 2 or Class 3 eBikes I personally do not find reasonable enough. I have had a chance to ride both on bike paths in town and I liked both of them! However, to be explicit, I would not fully enjoy a cruise on any of them. It’s mostly because neither of them has a proper suspension system suitable to absorb the bumpiness of a single-track trail. Given that I have ridden thousands of miles on my Class 1 eMountain Bike, I would definitely miss the performance of my rear shock. But hey! I’m only a voice out of 7 billion, don’t take it as gospel! Though, riding a Class 3 eBike with no suspension would definitely benefit from a few prayers, which is why I would rather choose not to ride one even if I were legally allowed.

To recap, eBikes are demonized, mostly by narrow-minded purist for not being capable of taming a trail on one's own power. It’s almost as if jealousy was the key ingredient in this recipe of hate. Traditionally, you start with a little bit of ignorance to grease up the pan, then you add a few ounces of fresh frustration, a half cup of flagrant favoritism, a pinch of inflated ego and a fistful of arrogance. To spice things up, you carefully pick the worst story out of the bunch and throw it right into the mix. In response to which a rational and sane individual is left with no choices other than to put a fancy hat on, attach a monocle, hold a glass of sophisticated wine and graciously nod in support to their dramatic narration… Take these examples for instance:

**“Trails need to be left to those bodily fit. Trails will be overrun with people who did not earn their way into the forest, and it will ruin the experience of those who did use their own pure body power to access the woods.” –** written by Cassie Pence

**“While many of us work hard and fight to build fitness and control our weight, the typical ebike user is trying to buy their way around this effort at the expense of existing users. Work elsewhere like the rest of us, if you're unwilling to do this then find another pastime because you're clearly not looking for a physical activity. Don't try to just 'lower the rim' and selfishly make the rest of us less safe and jeopardize our trail access*.”*** -written by Bill S

– WHACK ME WITH AN AIRPLANE. SERIOUSLY? THIS, IS BLATANT DISCRIMINATION, IN IT’S PUREST FORM. I am 31 and fit, I easily climb those trails on my traditional mountain bike on the slowest gear, may God strike me down if I ever become a disgrace with a sense of entitlement as such… Wipe off your crybaby snots and grow up! No one is taking away the fruits of your labor! Your achievements are yours to keep! Now, if you are one of those rare species that is greedily chasing Strava times as a form of supreme dominance in the world of constant competition, I want you to know that 99% of eBike riders just couldn't care less about your fictional trophies, it's all imaginary fame. Why are we the victims of your selfishness? With that attitude the only place you'll ever be famous in is your own delusion.

There was someone who wrote “**eBikes allows them easy access to the top of a hill so they can “rip” the downhill**”. I understand this message was intended to mock the eBikes riders like me who seek the thrill of the greatest reward that mountain biking has to offer, but honestly, I do not find this discouraging in any shape or form. Since when the desire to soothe the strain of an ascend is considered immoral? Time is now, embrace this inevitable reshape of outdated moral values. With the same rationale in mind, let’s ban Ski Resorts! At the end of the day, they use electrically powered motors on the premises of the National Forest, the purpose of which is ironically similar to what eBikes are trying to accomplish; The same privilege that already entitled trail users are taking for granted, when others are forced to fight for it.

In any case, I would like to conclude this letter by saying this: **Responsible and respectful eBike riders outnumber the irresponsible ones. The actions of the few should not restrict access for all.**

Thank you for your time everyone,

Sincerely,

-Vadim Ianulionoc