Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/26/2020 7:04:44 PM First name: Jane Last name: Ragan Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on selected items among the proposed changes regarding National Forest e-bike management on the National Forests. I generally support the proposed changes. E-biking is an entirely new form of recreation, one that should not be confused with either bicycling or motorcycling. I have extensive experience with all three modalities as I use all three for recreation on natural surface trails and share use with the two I'm not employing that day. And yes, e-bikes are everywhere on the Forest and--sanctioned or not--use has been shared extensively on both motorized and non-motorized multi-use trails for at least the past three years. The proposed definitions of bicycle and electric bicycle are appropriate and consistent with broadlyestablished definitions. As the impact of Class 1 e-bikes is comparable to--nearly identical with--mountain bikes, allowing Class 1 e-bikes where mountain bike use is currently permitted would be appropriate. If overuse of an area becomes an issue then a fair means of sharing it between the different types of user groups should be created with no discrimination against one type in favor of another. (The unmet need for increased trail development such a situation would point to should of course be recognized and addressed.) Whereas mountain bike and e-bike impacts are comparable, it is important that no bicycle access be removed in the process of allowing access for e-bikes. I would like to offer a few anecdotal remarks about Class 1 e-bike use. It does in fact allow this 62 year old rider and others like me access to trail opportunities on the Forest that I would no longer be able to manage on a traditional bike. It allows me to manage climbs that I no longer can--and you can't ride much if anything on The Tahoe where I live without a lot of climbing. It allows me to enjoy established loops that I could no longer manage otherwise, and maintain fitness in the process as e-biking is far from a free ride effort-wise. It allows me to enjoy rides with younger friends on their traditional bikes--at their pace--greatly increasing the health-maintaining social opportunity offered by use of the Forest. I am one of the leaders of a local trails organization that builds and maintains trails under a Volunteer Agreement with our District. As such I am an informed observer of the physical impacts different uses have on trails. I can perceive no difference in that impact on the trail bed between a Class 1 e-bike and a mountain bike (and both are far less than that of a horse). Fear of a new mode of recreation may be understandable but Forest management should not be based on unfounded fears. I have seen much misunderstanding and misinformation about the capabilities of Class 1 e-bikes on trails by those unfamiliar with them--or simply not desiring them--and by those unaware that they have in fact been successfully sharing the trails without conflicts for the last few years.