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Organization:

Title:

Comments: i am a 52 year old life long mountain biker. i injured my hip 6 years ago and have been unable to ride until i purchased my class 1 E mtn bike this year, which has changed my life. i am now able to ride the same mountain and single track trails as I used to as well as ride with my friends who still ride analog bikes. I ride exactly as i always did, but now i have an additional 35% assist that takes enough pressure off of my hip that it allows me to ride without pain. Going up hill i find that i am about 1 to 1.5 mph faster than i used to be on my regular bike. so if i used to ride up a hill at 6 MPH, i now go up at about 7 to 7.5 MPH. No difference than the difference in fitness levels between people. I know so many previous mtn. bikers who could no longer ride due to injuries or other health concerns that can now ride again. It has also allowed my 56 year old girlfriend, who never rode before, to be able to ride with me. she would never have the fitness level to be able to ride with me on an analog bike due to my lifetime of training and the arthritis she has in her knees. now we ride together and are able to exercise to keep healthy. there is no reason that class 1 E mtn. bikes should not be allowed on the same trails as a regular mtn. bike. they are exactly the same thing only with some assist. They are not a motorcycle as there is no throttle. The more you pedal, the more assist you get, without pedaling, you get no assist. They stop assisting you at 18-20 MPH. If you stop pedaling, you get zero assist. There is no legitimate reason to keep E mtn. bikes off single track trails. those who are against them, simply don't want additional people crowding "there" trails or simply do not understand what a class 1 e bike is. Not allowing class 1 e mtn bikes on the same trails is simply discrimination. I understand and agree that class 2 and class 3 e bikes should not be allowed because they are throttled bikes and therefore much more like a motorcycle than an actual bike.

the following are answers to all the arguments i have heard against e mtn bikes on single track trails.

1. e bikes go too fast -

so we are regulating speed on trails? All riders on analog bikes go faster downhill than any e bike can go uphill. Class 1 e bikes have no pedal assist above 20 mph. so downhill speed is always regulated by the skill level of the rider, not any power assist. Almost all analog and e bikes travel at speeds above 20 mph when going downhill. also, when going downhill, you are normally not pedaling, so again, you get zero assist on the class 1 bike making it identical to an analog bike. So, if you think that e bikes are to fast uphill and dangerous, then all bikes are to dangerous going downhill. Also, there are dramatic differences in fitness levels between riders. a strong rider on an analog bike will be dramatically faster uphill and downhill than a new or less fit rider on a class 1 e bike. I have never seen a speed limit on a trail.

2. they do more damage to trails because e bikes weigh more.

Not true. all riders are different weights. my girlfriend weighs 100 lbs and rides a 45 lb e bike. i weigh 148 lbs and ride a 48 lb e bike. e bikes weigh about 15-20 lbs more than regular bikes. most riders i see weigh more than we do. So if you combine the bike weight and the rider weight there are many regular bikes and riders who weigh more than e bike riders and bikes. So are we going to regulate weight? Also, e bikes have more traction than regular bikes as they usually have slightly longer wheelbase so they do not skid on trails as much. Lastly, what about 1000 lb horses? they don't do more damage than a bike and they are allowed on all of these trails.

3. e bikes should only be used on the same trails as motorcycles and off road vehicles?

that is an extremely dangerous ruling. i ride offroad motorcycles and dune buggies on trails approved for those activities. class 1, pedal assist e bikes, are the same as a regular bike. putting them on the same trails as motorcycles that travel at 30-50 mph on flats and uphill with a bike that travels 6-8 mph up hill and 10-15 on flats is extremely dangerous. off road motorcycles weigh as much as 300 lbs and use a throttle only. pedal assist class 1 mtn bikes are 90% regular bicycle. when i ride my class 1 bike on the motorcycle trails i fear for my safety the entire ride. they are completely different types of vehicles. class 1 bikes are 90% bike. class 2 and class 3 are closer to a motorcycle.

4. trails are already too crowded?

- so would it be fair to just ban class 1 e bikes? If that is your argument, then we should regulate how many hikers, walkers, mtn bikers, e mtn. bikers and horse back riders are on the trails, not just ban one type of user. There have been studies done saying that about 70% of all class 1 mtn bike riders are analog riders as well. so they would be on the trails anyway. I have never seen a trail that limits the number of users.

5. It allows inexperienced riders to get onto trails or go farther than their normal skill would have allowed?

- Another ridiculous argument. So now you want to regulate skill level? There are many very inexperienced analog mtn bike riders, hikers and horseback riders that go on trails they do not belong. A class 1 e bike does not buy you skill. You either have the skill to ride the trail or you do not. All the class 1 bikes do is give you some assist to help an older or injured rider to get up the trails with a little less impact on their joints and cardiovascular system. Almost all mtn bike riders and e mtn bike riders carry water, food, tools and supplies to be able to fix most bike issues on the trail. e bike riders are no more of a danger to themselves than an analog bike rider or hiker.

Mtn biking is one of the healthiest sports there is. It is not only great exercise physically but getting out in the outdoors is great mentally as well. to say that those with injuries like myself, or those with arthritis in their knees or the older father who wants to ride with his very fit 13 year old cannot have access to all of the same trails as an analog bike is simply unfair, and honestly, is discriminatory.

It is time to recognize that class 1 e bikes are almost identical to an analog bike, just with some additional assist. if you pedal, you get assist, if you do not pedal, you get zero assist. class 2 and class 3 e bikes are a completely different animal. they use a throttle so no pedaling is actually needed and they have much higher top end speeds, much more like a motorcycle.

We should all have the right to enjoy the outdoors safely. It is good for our physical and mental health. We are just asking to be treated equally. We just want to be able to ride our class 1 mtn. bikes and enjoy our friends and the outdoors. All the arguments against class 1 mtn bikes stem from complete misinformation on what a class 1 bike is and how it functions. Analog mtn. bikers spent many years also trying to get access to these same trails and there were endless discussions where hikers and horseback riders insisted they should not be allowed on "their" trails. analog bikers have now been sharing the trails with hikers and horseback riders for decades. This is the same thing. class 1 E mtn bikes are the future and it is time to accept them and allow us older and injured riders the same access to the trails the analog riders currently enjoy.