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Title:

Comments: This is a terrible mistake, driven solely by the absolute leadership failure of a president we currently endure. He has no rational or reasonable basis for his decision to do this. The decision will result not only to endanger the non-motorized users of the same trail systems, but undoubtedly also result in violent conflict between those who are riding motorized vehicles (including all classifications and types of "e-bikes"), and those using non-motorized means of access (foot, bicycles, equestrian, and all types of manually powered vehicles used by those with mobility impairments).

Make no mistake that all classifications and types of e-bikes ARE MOTORIZED VEHICLES! You are correct that they are becoming more technologically advanced. Just like motorcars or more traditional types of motorcycles in a commercial world of competitiveness - they are becoming lighter, quieter, and faster. Much much faster. That process will continue. I see them ridden on the BLM trail systems that I frequent, and they are dangerous. They are ridden by irresponsible operators (not riders..., remember that these are MOTORIZED VEHICLES). And without any of the restraint that one would hope for as regards speed or direction of travel.

"E-bikes" - as all other motorized vehicles - come upon other trail users very very quickly. And as quiet as "e-bikes" are becoming, without notice. I have had several narrowly averted collisions with e-bikes being ridden upon me at a high rate of speed, operated by persons who feel that suddenly, they own the trail system and everybody else needs to get off of it.

The solution to this?

Step one: recognized that all classifications and types of e-bikes are MOTORIZED VEHICLES. They have motors. The motors are electrically powered - but they are still motors. They are well hidden, often residing in a wheel hub - but have the exact same function as the internal-combustion motor in a motorcycle, a quad, or an automobile. They allow a high rate of speed with little or no effort required of the operator, except to sit and operate a throttle. Keeping in mind that even "pedal-assist" e-bikes have a throttle. They call it a crank-set in traditional bicycle terms. And which includes the associated power adjustment controller (knob to twist or lever to slide). They allow - with very little effort in the highest power mode - very high rates of speed either ascending or descending.

Step Two: Stay with your current practice of allowing only NON-motorized vehicles and NON-motorized modes of access on trails which are so designated.

Step Three: Designate that all classifications and types of e-bikes, and all other motorized vehicles may be used only on trails which are designated for motorized vehicles. There are many such trails & trail systems. More than are designated for non-motorized off-road bicycles.

Step Four: stay with current practice to prohibit use of motorized vehicles (including all classifications & types of e-bikes), on trails which are designated for non-motorized use).

Or - to be fair - simply remove all use designations and all prohibition from all trails. And in doing so - open every trail currently designated only for non-motorized use, to be used for any and all purposes - including the full slate of motorized vehicles such as internal-combustion-driven traditional motorcycles, quads, and full-sized off-road vehicles such as four-wheel-drive SUVs & pickups.

And if you elect this option - which is paramount to acknowledging that there WILL be collisions, the collisions

WILL result in injuries, and you don't really care - then you need to be very concerned about where the courts will fall-out on resulting litigation, and what it will do to the integrity of the USFS (and other public land-administrators).

This is a very serious problem. Look at your initial reasons for separating motorized and non-motorized use of trails. Look at your reasons for use prohibitions even on trails designated for non-motorized use. Those were sound reasons, developed by reasonable individuals using rational decision-making. Those reasons are still valid. By allowing motorized vehicles on trails designated for non-motorized use - you are invalidating all of those reasons and destroying any feasible ability to enforce any motorized vs non-motorized contest of trail use or designation.