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Comments: Let me first say that I work in the bike industry and have undertaken projects for a number of e-bike brands. E-bikes, like bicycles, motorcycles, and automobiles can be used responsibly for both transportation and recreation.

That said, I would advocate against opening non-motorized trails to e-bike use. As an industry insider, I can tell you that it is misguided at best to entrust the classification system of e-bikes, largely created by the industry itself for policy steering and PR purposes, to guide your decision making process.

I have personally ridden an e-bike in the last month that has yet to hit the market that would close this land management dialogue with a single test ride. This e-bike technically falls within the Class 1, 2 & 3 system, but it also accelerates to the maximum permitted 28mph in under 3 seconds, can maintain this speed with a mechanism that under any other circumstance would be called a throttle, and has a range of up to 40 miles.

The notion that there will be any sort of classification based enforcement of e-bikes on trail is both impractical and unrealistic. And given what I have just told you to expect on trails in the coming year, opening non-motorized trails to this type of machine will create unsafe circumstances for both the e-bike operators and fellow trail users.

The e-bike on non-motorized trails topic should completely omit reference to classification, and instead be framed as a 'go' or 'no go' proposition. As I prefaced this letter, I believe that in responsible hands, e-bikes could be used in a manner compatible with current non-motorized use. Unfortunately I also know that the bike industry has a motive for selling bikes first, and managing public relations and policy second.

And the reality is that the temptation to ride a machine to its potential is far greater than most people have sense. As a colleague said of the aforementioned e-bike after spending a half hour roosting around as if riding a motorcycle, 'this thing will bring out the idiot in everyone'. Does that sound like responsible, non-motorized compatible use?