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Comments: Greetings, As an avid hiker on National Forest trails, I am writing to express concern about the Forest Service's proposed rule to open up National Forest lands to additional e-bike use.

I think it's very important that E-bikes must continue to be treated as motor vehicles, not bicycles. New e-bikes are being developed now that will drive up to 55 mph! Wild land trails designed for hikers and horses (and even mountain bikes) would not necessarily be able to handle this new type of use. I foresee issues with erosion of trail treads and more user conflicts.

Because there is almost no enforcement now for illegal off-trail riding, and illegal trail development by some bikers, I am concerned that e-bikes will increasingly trespass into Wilderness and other protected areas with no consequences. I am worried your proposed rule will encourage illegal use that will ultimately degrade the wild character of these lands that many Americans cherish.

In addition, the proposed rule appears to set up contradictions with the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule. We've already gone through a lengthy public process to consider user conflicts and how to minimize resource damage in a very localized and place specific manner. A new over arching rule could create problems for management going forward and sending us back to the drawing board to re-hash already resolved issues.

In addition, as a person who values the opportunity to enjoy viewing wildlife, I am concerned that, because e-bikes can travel much farther into the backcountry, they will disturb wildlife over far greater distances, creating more impacts.

Finally, because this proposed rule suggests highly likely environmental impacts, I think it needs to be more carefully evaluated through a full environmental impact statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This rule could have a very significant impact in many locations and demands the highest level of scrutiny and most careful consideration.

Personally, I think E-bikes should be allowed only where motor vehicles are allowed. For all these reasons, I urge the Forest Service should withdraw this proposal.

Thanks for considering my comments.