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Comments: I strongly oppose the Forest Service's proposed rule to open up National Forest lands to additional e-bike use. E-bikes are truly motor vehicles, not bicycles. There are new e-bikes being developed that will drive up to 55 mph. E-bikes should travel only where motor vehicles are allowed. Whether they are electric or not, they are motor vehicles.

As a lover of wildlife and natural environments, I am especially concerned about the impact E-bikes will have on wilderness areas.

Because of their speed and quiet nature, e-bikes are more dangerous than other motor vehicles. They can travel much farther into the backcountry, and startle and disturb wildlife over far greater distances. E-bikes also conflict with other nonmotorized trail users like hikers, horseback riders, and bicyclists.

Because there is almost no enforcement now for trespass, illegal off-trail riding, and illegal trail development by some bikers, e-bikes will increasingly trespass into Wilderness and other protected areas with no consequences. This illegal use will degrade the wild character of these lands and should not be encouraged.

The proposed rule suggests environmental impacts that should be fully evaluated through an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). It also sets up conflicts with the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212 et seq).

I strongly believe that for the good of our forests and hikers like myself who enjoy wildlife, the Forest Service should withdraw this proposal.