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Comments: I oppose allowing e-bikes on trails presently designated as non-motorized routes. In addition, I oppose opening wilderness areas to motorized vehicles. E-bikes utilize an electric-assist motor to propel the bike forward. Really, no one riding a very heavy E-bike is pedaling it, especially on trails with any kind of elevation change. Since E-bike use has taken off in recently, new technologies will soon be available that allow e-bikes to drive at speeds up to 55 mph. That is a motorized vehicle! Motorized vehicles belong only on trails currently designated for motorized traffic.

Research shows that like all forms of recreation, mountain bikes displace wildlife. But because they travel farther and faster than hikers or equestrians, they can impact a much greater area in the same amount of time. E-bikes can travel much farther into the backcountry in less time, and startle and disturb wildlife over far greater distances. E-bikes also conflict with non-motorized trail users like hikers, horseback riders, and bicyclists. In addition, motorized vehicles can carry invasive species further into wilderness areas at a higher rate. And motorized vehicles traveling at faster speeds cause greater damage to trails via erosion and rutting.

A significant segment of the mountain biking community has become one of the most ardent opponents of wilderness designation and are pushing to open existing Wildernesses to bikes. It would be a travesty to allow that to happen just because they have a louder organized lobbying group. Wilderness areas should remain designated with their current protections with wildlife and landscapes as their primary focus.