Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/21/2020 6:55:41 PM First name: Elisabeth Last name: Carroll Organization:

Title:

Comments: I oppose the Forest Service's proposed rule to open up National Forest lands to additional e-bike use. E-bikes must continue to be treated as motor vehicles, not bicycles. Some e-bikes can reach speeds up to 55 mph and must only be allowed to travel only where motor vehicles are allowed. In addition, because of their speed and quiet nature, e-bikes can travel over great distances into the backcountry and startle and disturb wildlife. E-bikes can also cause conflict with other nonmotorized trail users like hikers, horseback riders, and bicyclists. This proposed rule suggests environmental impacts should be fully evaluated through an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The proposed rule appears to set up conflicts with the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212 et seq). 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 as this rule will do. The Forest Service should withdraw this proposal. Thank you.