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Comments: I oppose the Forest Service's proposed rule to open up my National Forest lands to additional e-bike use for the following reasons:

E-bikes should be treated as motor vehicles, not as bicycles. New e-bikes are being developed with speeds up to 55 mph. E-bikes should travel solely where motor vehicles are permitted.

This proposed rule suggests likely environmental impacts that 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).

A consequence of their speed and quiet nature is that e-bikes can travel much farther into the back country, startling and disturbing wildlife over far greater distances. E-bikes also conflict with other non-motorized trail users like hikers, horseback riders, and bicyclists.

Because there is scarce enforcement 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 be discouraged.

The Forest Service should withdraw this proposal.