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Comments: I oppose the Forest Service's proposed rule to open up National Forest lands to additional e-bike use. I live in an area that has long been a destination for bicycle recreation, especially mountain biking, and now e-bikes. I have personally witnessed the damage to trails, erosion and destruction of wildlife habitat that comes with increased bike use. I have also been involved in trail conflicts with cyclists who disregard the most basic courtesy for sharing trails.

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. Therefore, E-bikes must travel only where motor vehicles are allowed.

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).

E-bikes can travel much farther into the backcountry, disturbing 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 damage or destroy wildlife habitat and 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 for considering my comments.