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Comments: I used to work as a Wilderness ranger on the Stanislaus NF, and I oppose the Forest Service's proposed rule to open up any of my National Forest lands to additional e-bike use for the following reasons:

New e-bikes are being developed now that will drive up to 55 mph. They're not compatible with nonmotorized forms of recreation.

This proposed rule suggests likely environmental impacts that should be fully evaluated through an EIS under the NEPA.

The proposed rule appears to set up conflicts with the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212 et seq).

Because of their speed and quiet nature, e-bikes can travel much farther into the backcountry, and easily startle and disturb wildlife over far greater distances. E-bikes also spook 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, cause devegetation and erosion, and spread noxious weed seeds further than ever, and should not be encouraged as this rule will do.

The Forest Service should withdraw this proposal asap.