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

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

E-bikes must continue to be treated as motor vehicles, not bicycles. New e-bikes are being developed that will drive up to 55 mph. E-bikes must travel only where motor vehicles are allowed.

Because of their speed and quiet nature, e-bikes can travel much farther into the backcountry, and startle and disturb 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 degrade the wild character of these lands and should not be encouraged as this rule will do.

I am a supporter of bicycling for both transportation and recreation; however, there are places where bicycles, especially e-bikes, are not appropriate. I have seen first-hand the damage that carelessly used bicycles do on trails in local parks and such activities are not appropriate in National Forests and other valuable protected land.

The Forest Service should withdraw this proposal.