

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/21/2020 10:15:29 PM

First name: Paula

Last name: Shafransky

Organization:

Title:

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

1.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. E-bikes must travel only where motor vehicles are allowed. Traveling this fast on a trail will only lead to degradation of the trail as well as bodily harm to hikers.

2.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).

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

4.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. I am an avid hiker and use my time in the wilderness to get some peace and quiet.

5.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 have seen this happening in the North Cascades where I do the majority of my hiking.

The Forest Service should definitely withdraw this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,

Paula Shafransky