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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

I strongly oppose the Forest Service's proposed rule to open up my National Forest lands to additional e-bike use!

I am a long time user of the National Forest system. One of the things that is most important to me when I visit is the serenity of nature. I'm opposed to this proposal because it would allow many more people to disturb this serenity. This is vital not only for other humans like myself, but for the animals and plants to live undisturbed.

E-Bikes should be considered as MOTOR VEHICLES, NOT bicycles! They have motors! Just because they are quiet doesn't mean they are non-destructive, especially to nature trails. They can penetrate deeply and quietly into natural areas, disturbing wildlife over great distances. E-bikes must only be used 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). However, it appears to set up conflicts with the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212 et seq).

Again: 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 than ever before. E-bikes also conflict with other nonmotorized trail users.

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.

The Forest Service must withdraw this proposal!

Thank you.