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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am appalled to hear that the U.S. Forest Service is proposing to open up more trails in our National Forests to electric bikes, or e-bikes, through a new rulemaking process. The proposal has huge implications for wildlands, wildlife, and Wilderness on more than 150 million acres of our public lands. New technologies are now being developed to manufacture e-bikes that can drive up to 55 mph, so they could travel much farther into the backcountry in less time, and startle and disturb wildlife over far greater distances. E-bikes also conflict with nonmotorized trail users like hikers, horseback riders, and bicyclists.

While I understand that the Forest Service proposes to continue classifying e-bikes as motor vehicles, I'm concerned that it appears that the reason for the rule is to allow e-bikes on non-motorized trails in the future because your agency is treating e-bikes differently than other motor vehicles.

I hear that a significant segment of the mountain biking community has become one of the most ardent opponents of wilderness designation and, more significantly, is pushing to open existing Wildernesses to bikes. That will presumably include e-bikes if they're eventually allowed on non-motorized trails on public lands.

Consequently I adamantly urge the Forest Service to withdraw this proposal and urge you to continue to treat e-bikes as motor vehicles.

Respectfully,
Marianne Follingstad