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

E-bikes must continue to be treated as motor vehicles, not bicycles. I live in a neighborhood with many e-bike users and I've observed how much faster these bikes go. Now new e-bikes are being developed that will drive up to 55 mph. The chances for collisions on the trail and disturbance of wildlife will increase accordingly. The amount of wear and tear that the bikes can do will also increase. E-bikes must travel only 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).

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 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. The Forest Service should withdraw this proposal.