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Comments: I am writing to express my extreme opposition to the Forest Service's proposed rule to allowing additional e-bike use on National Forest Lands. These lands are first and foremost home and protection for wildlife, and the proposal needs to be withdrawn immediately.

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 hikers, horseback riders, and bicyclists using trails.

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.

E-bikes are motor vehicles and must be prohibited. They are not bicycles -- they have motors and reach speeds of motor vehicles.

This proposed rule suggests environmental impacts that should be fully evaluated through an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

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

The Forest Service should withdraw this proposal at once to protect and preserve wildlife.