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Comments:

I oppose the Forest Service's proposed rule to open my National Forest lands to additional e-bike use. E-bikes are motor vehicles, not bicycles. New e-bikes will be able to hit speeds of up to 55 mph. E-bikes must travel only where motor vehicles are allowed! Further, 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) before implementation. And the proposed Rule sets up conflicts with the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212 et seq).

Because of their speed, agility, and quiet nature, e-bikes can travel much farther into the backcountry, and startle and disturb wildlife over far greater distances. E-bikes also startle and 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.

For all these reasons and more, the Forest Service should withdraw this proposal.