

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/22/2020 3:56:48 PM

First name: T

Last name: Feltus

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I believe there is a fair amount of misinformation or bias on the topic. I am a bicycle mechanic, I rarely deal with e-mtb and am not a huge fan, but I feel that there is an unreasonable amount of demonization of them.

I know a couple of people who use e-mtb specifically to reach the top of descents more easily, so the motor is basically a replacement for a chairlift. This is nominally what many of the current e-mtb are designed for, hence the naming of Pivot's "Shuttle". I also have a customer who is in his 60s and not confident at all on a bike, but the assistance has given him the ability to ride with his partner, enjoying trails he would otherwise not be able to ride, and this is fantastic. The industry is currently not supporting the group who I believe should be the biggest market share, being those older people who want the assistance to enjoy simple trails. All of the half-decent e-mtb are long-ish travel Enduro machines, when I think there should be more product focused at the cross-country platform.

I think there will always be a small group of people who will purchase an e-mtb just to be lazy, and ride normal trails that don't need the assistance, but I would guess this will remain under 10% of users (This trend is much more common with e-bikes for commuting).

From a trail-use point of view, Class 1 e-bikes lose electric assist at 20mph, most semi-fit cyclists can reach 20mph without electric assist, and can certainly exceed this speed on descents: the electric-assist element of bike use on a trail will not increase speed, it will only increase speed a little in certain areas (i.e. during sustained climbs). Class 1 electric-assist bikes are also not able to spin out (i.e. power-slide or drift under power) like a motorcycle, so trail erosion will be identical to that under use of purely human-powered cycles.

I would urge any skeptics to try and demo an e-mtb before coming to any conclusion. I recommend Specialized and Rocky Mountain, as their power units are better at modulating the assist in a "natural" manner as compared to the Shimano and Bosh units in most of the other good e-mtb.

I also think there is little point in the US government trying to make their own rules without referring to what's happening in Europe and the rest of the world, as the tiny market share that the USA represents in the global bicycle market will mean that they will get whatever can be sold in the rest of the world.