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Comments: It's discouraging to hear that the Department of Agriculture is considering allowing e-bikes on trails in our National Forests where non-motorized bikes are currently allowed, but motorized use is prohibited. E-bikes are characteristically different from non-motorized bikes. These motorized bicycles have the capability of reaching speeds of 20 mph with little assist and carry riders much farther much faster with greater damage to the trails and the soundscape than ordinary bikes. The rationale that everybody ought to be able to go everywhere they are able with the assist of a motor highlights an attitude of entitlement, and exposes a shocking lack of respect, restraint, and care for our public lands. They add to disturbance in wildlife habitat and change the character of the trail experience. There are miles and miles of motorized trails where e-bikes fit, where the disturbance, noise, and the erosion are already sanctioned.

Further, this is not the time, when people are suffering and focused on health and safety, to make changes to rules that will impact all users of public lands. To make such a change in land management policies during a pandemic and without any analysis of the environmental impact as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is irresponsible.