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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity for the public to engage on FSM 7700 and 7710, which would revise Forest Service directives to update and clarify guidance on management of electric bicycle (e-bike) use on National Forest System lands.

Most importantly, I think it is imperative that people stop calling e-Mountain Bikes "electric bicycles".

They are actually "pedal-assisted bikes". Any other language leads people to believe these types of bicycles are MOTORIZED!!! They are NOT motorized. They will not, and cannot move under their own power. The operator has to pedal the bicycle in a normal fashion or it will not move.

As much language as possible should be revised to reflect this proper terminology.

If decision makers are under the impression that you sit on them, twist a throttle, throw a rooster tail, and go ripping through the trails, then I understand the protest. That is what an "electric motorcycle" or "electric dirtbike" does. You must understand it only helps you pedal by giving you "stronger legs", but does nothing by itself.

A key point I would like to make:

Any expert mountain biker can get going faster than 20mph on a pedal powered bike. There's thousands of miles of trails where a Class 1 eBike will always be slower than a pedal bike because of the speed limitation of the system.

So if your impression is that eBikes are "faster" than pedal powered bicycles, they are NOT.

The primary function of the eBike is to give weaker riders, or people regaining fitness a chance to be able to enjoy the experience of cycling without having to push their bike up hills, and force their friends to wait on them.

Older riders can get back outdoors. Injured riders can recuperate. Wives can keep up with husbands or vice versa.

Further it allows ordinary riders the possibility to ride "longer", thus increasing the experience for all concerned.

I appreciate your listening to my plea.

The mountain bike community is responsible for a large part of the natural surface trail infrastructure that exists today on our federal, state and local public lands. Hundreds of organized mountain bike clubs around the country manage thousands of volunteers who work closely with land managers on trail development, trail maintenance, and trail education for all users. Much of this work relies on funding sources specific to non-motorized trail projects.

The proposed directives could jeopardize this funding and increase user conflict if non-motorized trails were to become reclassified as motorized to allow for eMTBs. Instead, the final directive must reconsider how to allow class 1 eMTBs on select non-motorized trails while retaining a trail's non-motorized status, similar to the recent Department of Interior final rule. The final directive can be further improved by following the International

Mountain Bicycling Association's management recommendations: managing the three classes of e-bikes separately from one another, and prohibiting class 2 and class 3 eMTBs on natural surface, non-motorized trails.

Mountain bikers appreciate the leap in technology presented by eMTBs is a unique management challenge. These proposed directives rightfully plan separate management for bicycles and electric bicycles. It is critical that land managers and local mountain bikers work together to determine where eMTBs are and are not appropriate on current and future mountain bike trails.

Thank you for the willingness to engage with the mountain bike community.

Sincerely,

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