

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/22/2020 10:31:15 PM

First name: Gerard

Last name: Horan

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.

I have been a mountain biker for over 30 years, I am 57 years old and 3 years ago I developed a knee injury that prohibited me from mountain biking for over a year. 2 years ago I got a class 1 Ebike and using that I was able to return to biking regularly without knee issues. It is a Class 1 Ebike which as you know is rate limited and requires pedal assist. U must pedal. I believe that Class 1 Ebikes rate limited are identical to normal ebike in terms of wear and tear and should be allowed the same privileges. Being able to die again has helped my health, both mentally and physically. We need to encourage others to take up riding ( even with the use of an ebike) for the health of society as a whole.

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.