

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/22/2020 11:22:43 PM

First name: Colette

Last name: Reamer

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity 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.

The mountain bike community is responsible for a large part of the natural surface trail infrastructure 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 heavily 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.

Class 1: (ALLOW ON NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS) eBikes that are pedal-assist only, with no throttle, and have a maximum assisted speed of 20 mph.

Class 2: (NOT ALLOWED) eBikes that also have a maximum speed of 20 mph, but are throttle-assisted.

Class 3: (NOT ALLOWED) eBikes that are pedal-assist only, with no throttle, and a maximum assisted speed of 28 mph.

Mountain bikers understand the technology presented by eMTBs is a unique management challenge, and 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 positive collaboration and engagement with the mountain bike community.