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Organization:
Title:
Comments: I am writing to urge you to maintain the designation that ebikes/pedal assist bikes are motorized vehicles and should not be allowed on forest service land trails, nor should any motorized vehicles.

I live in Ashland, OR where ebikes have flourished due to a lack of enforcement and a disregard for regulation by ebikers. Ashland provides a perfect case study for the havoc that 50+ pound motorized bikes can have on trails. With the rise of ebike users here, our trails are in the worst conditions I have ever seen and will only get worse over time. Many local cyclists have stopped riding these formerly wonderful trails altogether.

As I'm sure many have stated, non motorized trails were not built with these machines in mind. Ebikes can carry speed through sections of trail that were not built for speed, that take significantly more force to stop and created rutted break bumps, and because they make riding nearly effortless, they facilitate many, many laps when a normal biker could only do one in a day -- simply leading to increased wear and tear.

Additionally, on a more selfish but valid note. As a trail user and advocate, I find that while pedaling up trails and forest service roads (which are closed to vehicles in the ashland watershed), it can feel less like a nature experience and more like a highway. Ebikes pass me at 15-20 mpg where as a fit, experienced biker, I am going ~5 mph. The motors emit a noisy whirring sound that feels disruptive and not fit for recreation in nature.

Please, keep forest service land natural. The vast majority of ebikers have regular bikes as well, and I don't believe we are limiting access whatsoever. I would have no issue if there were a clause for allowing disabled users to ride ebikes on forest service land.

I know policy can struggle to keep up with technology, so I urge you to set a strong precedence to protect our forests for years to come.

Regards,
Craig Gorder