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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have been mountain biking for 20 years. I'm a small female, aged 74, with a couple of disabilities worsened by age. Pedaling my regular mtb bike up the steepest hills was causing injury, so I now ride a class 1 pedal assist e-mtb. It has been a wonderful gift.

My class 1 e-mtb is a human-powered, silent, unobtrusive assistive device that does nothing to detract from other trails users' experiences. It is virtually identical to a regular mtb. It helps protect me from injury and is extending my riding years.

With the motor governor set at 20 mph, my top speed is the same, and average speed has increased by only two mph. Both are slower than most other riders on their regular mtbs. Rider speed is determined primarily by gravity, rider skill, the desire to speed, and risk tolerance. Pedal assist does not change those factors.

Banning me from riding my class 1 e-mtb would discriminate against women, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

Everyone agrees that motorized and nonmotorized users should have separated user areas. Rules defining nonmotorized trails need to accommodate the new assistive technology offered by class 1 pedal-assist e-mtbs, which should be allowed on all trails open to regular mtbs.

Class 2 and 3 e-mtbs are sufficiently different from regular mtbs to be put into the motorized category. They belong on motorized trails.

Regarding trail (i.e., human) conflicts: Fifty years of recreating on public lands as an equestrian, backpacker, trail runner, hiker, rafter, and mountain biker have taught me that some individuals in all user groups have strong opinions against other users and want them banned. If we took all their biases seriously, nobody would be allowed on trails or rivers. Trail conflicts are caused by ignorance, rudeness, prejudice, and elitism that are human failings not unique to any one user group.

I cherish our public lands. Thank you for protecting them, and for taking the time to read this.