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Comments:

Even though I am in an age bracket that might benefit from an e-bike to get where I want to go, I do not want to see increased use on public land on trails that are not already designated for multi use which includes motorized modes of transportation. E-bikes must continue to be treated as motor vehicles, not bicycles. New e-bikes are being developed now that will drive up to 55 mph.

It's hard enough at time to share trails that allow bikes. With faster e-bikes, I would worry even more about conflicts with hikers, horses or skiers or snowshoers in winter.

This proposed rule suggests likely environmental impacts that should be fully evaluated through an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The proposed rule also appears to set up conflicts with the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule (36 CFR 212 et seq).

The further someone can go into the back country due to the ease of using an e-bike the more likely they are to disrupt wildlife.

Because there is almost no enforcement now for trespass, illegal off-trail riding, and illegal trail development by some bikers, e-bikes will increasingly trespass into Wilderness and other protected areas with no consequences. This illegal use will degrade the wild character of these lands and should not be encouraged as this rule will do. We have seen this in our own area of Maine and can foresee it happening that much more elsewhere with more use.

The Forest Service should withdraw this proposal. Keep our wild places a bit more wild for the future.