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Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to your proposed new rules 7700 & 7710. In short, I *do not* agree with these changes.

I'm well aware of the demand for electric-assist mountain bikes access on trails, but we must also protect the user experience of all other users recreating on non-motorized USFS trails.

To that end, I'm extremely concerned about the current approach to classify e-bikes as motorized vehicles. By doing so, you hurt not only the existing non-motorized land users, but also make it more difficult for e-bike riders to enjoy the public lands.

This solution will jeopardize funding sources to maintain traditionally non-motorized trails by requiring a change in designation to enable e-bike access. Furthermore, it only increases the confusion around e-bike usage, as it does not align with recent decisions made within the DOI agencies.

I recommend the following simpler solutions:

Adopt Class 1 e-bikes as non-motorized transportation.

Adopt Class 2 and 3 e-bikes as motorized transportation.

Allow Class 1 on non-motorized trails upon completion of an environmental review and public comment process, driven by local forests and/or districts.

Prohibit Class 2 and 3 on non-motorized trails.

Encourage programmatic NEPA review of eMTB impact on non-motorized trails, at the District, Forest or Regional level, to ease the review burden on a trail by trail basis.

Approach eMTB access by using a "Closed Unless Signed Open" basis.

By allowing Class 1 on non-motorized trails on a case by case basis and upon completion of a review process, the USFS offers flexibility at the local level and preserves maintenance funding sources that can be pursued by hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers to help maintain thousands of miles of trail throughout the United States. Class 1 e-bike technology is quickly becoming ubiquitous, so the above approach also makes enforcement easier and reduces consumer confusion.

It is my understanding that the above approach is also in line with the wishes of People for Bikes, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, multiple mountain bike manufacturers, as well as my own local mountain bike organization, the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance.

Thank you,

Tom