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Comments:

Thank you for allowing me to provide input on the proposed new nationwide National Forest Service (NFS) electric bicycle policy. I realize that with the popularity of e-bikes, clarification is needed. However, I hope that the policies can be thoughtfully implemented, taking into consideration the impact on the National Forest lands and those who recreate on them.

I am an avid participant in outdoor activities; hiker, bicycle rider, and cross country skier. I believe e-bikes serve a purpose for certain individuals such as the elderly or disabled and also for those individuals who use them on bike lanes/roads instead of using vehicles. I believe that class 2 e-bikes and those that are able to exceed 20 mph (class 3) should not be allowed on any non-motorized trail. Even class 1 e-bikes can be too fast in certain conditions and can impact the safety and the quality of the outdoor experience for others and should be limited on certain trails.

I believe that class 2 and 3 e-bikes essentially are electric motorcycles and people drive them as such. They do not belong on non-motorized trails. Not only are they not safe for hikers, other bikers and horses, they can be unsafe for the riders and they take away from the ambience of being in the great outdoors. I want to enjoy the outdoors; I do not want to continually be on the lookout for e-bikes rapidly approaching. Those e-bikes belong only on roads and or bike lanes.

Further, I cannot find any reason that the Forest Service needs to have a policy to promote e-biking on NFS land. If you do decide to allow certain e-bikes, I would hope that you would not open all trails to e-bike use. Reserving many trails without e-bikes would be the prudent thing to do.

In addition, we need to increase the lands available to recreate. This has been especially evident during the pandemic. People want places to get away from others and enjoy the great outdoors. However, trailheads and trails are overrun. People are not following basic rules for being in the outdoors and taking care of the land. Staffing is already limited to maintain the lands and enforce the rules.