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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity for the public to engage on FSM 7700 and 7710.

I would like to correct misnomers that people have about e-bikes and have been submitted as reasons to prohibit e-bikes from non-motorized trails:

1. E-bikes are explosive firebombs that will create wildfires because of their lithium batteries. Lithium batteries are safe. Airlines allow cellphones and laptop computers on their commercial flights. An airline has significant liability if a flight catches on fire and passengers are injured or killed. There are thousands of commercial flights daily, each flight is carrying hundreds of lithium batteries. This policy has been in practice for decades. The risk for all practical purposes is zero.
2. E-bikes will congest existing trails and put a strain on available resources. I cannot believe the selfish attitude in this statement! The National Forest trail system is not built for a certain group or discipline. The longtime mission of the forest service is management and stewardship of our public lands FOR THE PUBLIC! e-bike riders are part of that public and as part of the public will volunteer and donate to maintain existing trails and build new ones.
3. E-bikes are noisy and polluting. E-bikes are not internal combustion machines and as such are silent, produce no exhaust gases or spark risk.
4. E-bikes are intrusive and disruptive to the environment. You will not find any e-bike rider bushwacking. The tires of the e-bike are thin to conserve weight, pneumatic, and therefore prone to punctures and leaks. The e-bike has to maintain a velocity of 2-3 mph to stay upright and stable. E-bike riders stay on existing trails.
5. E-bikes disrupt wildlife and endanger habitat. This is the narrative of a self-interest group that has not even slung its leg over an e-bike. This is not my personal experience. E-bike riders stay on the trail, due to the limitations of the e-bike. Most of the time, I will see some form of wildlife during a ride - deer, bears, coyotes, bobcats, squirrels, chipmunks, snakes and of course rabbits, Most of the time, I am there and gone and the animal does not lift its head to see what's up. If the e-bike is disruptive to wildlife, I would not be seeing any wildlife on the trail at all.
6. E-bikes are self propelled and as such should be classified as motorized vehicles. This is not true. Class 1 e-bikes are pedal assist. This fact puts them in a different category. They are a hybrid of human/electric motor propulsion. A human must be pushing the pedals in order to actuate the motor. Class 1 e-bikes do not fit the definition of a motorized vehicle. It would make regulations much simpler and easier to enforce if Class 1 e-bikes are classified as non-motorized.

Sincerely,

Kim J. Cerioni