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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello, I'm a mountain biker and I believe your proposal to classify e-bikes as motorized is dangerous and could be very damaging to trail access and trail funding.

The proposal to classify e-bikes as motorized, then allow them on non-motorized trails is at odds with how other agencies are approaching this, and will set up an epic access battle between the USFS, mountain bikers, equestrians and hikers.

This is a HUGE deal, and I support the proposal as put forth by Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance. It just makes sense, and will have your agency a lot of headache.

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.

Sincerely,

Justin Vander Pol