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Organization:

Title:

Comments: to whom it may concern regarding e-bike trail access,

I am a 62 year old male, born, raised and working in other parts of Wyoming and the US and now retired in Jackson Wyoming. I grew up with being able to run a 4-wheel drive and motorcycles about anywhere in our forests to what we now have in roadless, non-motorized regulation. To the other extreme, I have also experienced travel in the Netherlands where bikes and bike education are very important to the daily commute and recreation. With the explosion of two and 4-wheel drive motorized vehicles, I am so happy those regulations are in place to preserve nature, yet allow access for many. But I also see the need for more education and licensing with the growing numbers of e-bikes on our trails and pathways in the US and worldwide.

I have changed hobbies since my 20's...I am now a bike fanatic after being a trail runner and backcountry hiker along with mountain biker for almost 40 years. It is a combination of all these hobbies over 60 years that bring me to comment.

Yes we need access on designated trails/roads for mountain bikes! Do we need motors on these bikes on these trails? YES! At 62 I am also beginning to realize access to my favorite trails and roads has changed with age and realize it will continue to change as I age. So I want to receive the right to ride with a limited, 20 mph (or less) and always with physical assist of some kind, but with education and possible licensing.

My rational would be such and I would even bring that at times to our paved biking paths around Jackson. Age matters for the ability and knowledge to ride safely on these trails with motor assist. Here are some experiences I have had. On paved bike paths around Jackson I am seeing an amazing increase in under age drivers, under 15 years of age who are not prepared to ride with the understanding of the rules of the road but are "in control" of not less than 35 pound bikes and up to 60 and 70 pound e-bikes. Another example, I also see older adults retiring here from many walks of life who are accessing trails, with maybe more respect I might add, than young riders. However these older riders have their ideas of the rules for pathways also which they see as just hiking trails or sidewalks and not as pathways or designated mountain biking trails.

I am very concerned both on and off trails for riders young and old that may be on a collision course of sorts without some idea of the rules of the road and the experience on heavier e-bikes. It is also very concerning to see the speed of a rider on a single track approaching each other over a hilltop. I have struggled to ride with age without assist on mountain bikes where that quick motorized shot to get over a steep hill might be needed with age, a bad knee, hip or aging heart/lungs, but also that knowledge with age and/or experience of what might be approaching on the other side. It is one thing to layover a bike doing 10 to 35 miles an hour, it hurts. But a head-on collision only doubles that danger of two forces colliding with both doing 20 miles an hour.

So YES on assist but with education and maybe licensing would be needed to receive that right. My AVERAGE speed for mountain biking on my Garmin over 25 years of mountain biking on trails has AVERAGED under and around 10 miles per hour. I have felt safe with speed up hill and down hill and around hidden curves being higher and lower at times. On paved pathways with a roadbike that AVERAGE speed raises to around 17 to 18 miles per hour. You can see the difference in average speed relative to the varied trail conditions. With 40 years experience I am a fairly competent but fast rider in great shape according to Garmin's or Strava data on my averages for my age. But do I feel safe with a mountain bike with uneducated riders going 20 miles per hour on single track, a resounding NO! This resounding NO is also applicable to the speeds and education of riders on paved pathways with markings similar to roadways.

Yes we need motorized access to trails and pathways. However education and maybe licensing along with limits on motor speed with physical assist will be key to riders safety and success in the long run. If I can do anymore to help this passionate hobby of mine, please contact me.

Sincerely,

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