

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/26/2020 1:20:25 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have been an avid mountain biker for over twenty years. Mountain biking was my life. I raced a variety of disciplines and loved exploring new trails. One year ago I was diagnosed with a rare medical condition that no longer allows me to do aerobic exercise. No hiking, biking, skiing. Nothing. I was absolutely devastated at the thought of no longer enjoying the mountains. So I finally took the plunge and got an e-mountain bike. What an amazing compromise. It allows me to get out in the mountains while regulating my physical exertion. It has been an absolute life saver to my sanity and quality of life. Sadly, I am not alone. I have heard a plethora of other stories similar to mine. E-mtb bikes allow disabled access to trails where people can continue to spend time in the great outdoors with friends and family. I do not consider class 1 e-bikes motorized vehicles. You must pedal the bike for assistance and my speed on the ebike is no faster than when I was in "race shape". These bikes are in no way similar to a dirt bike or ATV. They offer assistance, but do not do the work for you and the maximum speed is regulated. I think we can look at our neighbors to the north for appropriate guidance. British Columbia, a mountain bike mecca of the world, allows class 1 e-bikes on the majority of their trails, only disallowing in environmentally sensitive areas.

I believe class 1 e-bikes should be classified as non-motorized transportation. I do not believe they require a new class under MVUM. These bikes require pedal assistance and should be allowed on non-motorized trails. Class 2 and 3 e-bikes should be classified as motorized transportation. Environmental reviews should be done for trails in sensitive areas and regulations adjusted as needed. This is in alignment with twenty seven other states across the US, IMBA, EMBA, Canada and most of Europe. Adopting this same classification by the USFS helps to create consistency between federal land management agencies as well as other states' legislative initiatives, ultimately helping to reduce consumer conflict by creating a consistent management objective. Class 1 ebikes are gaining in popularity and the technology is advancing quickly. It will soon be impossible to tell a class 1 ebike from a regular bike. Take this opportunity now to evolve with the times and be a leader in the industry. If this classification system is not adopted, then exceptions should be made for the disabled.