

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/26/2020 4:16:04 PM

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Comments: The devil in the details of the Forest Service's proposed motorized bicycle ("ebike") rules is that non-motorized trails would become open to all manner of motor vehicles.

The problems with the actual language of the proposal (as opposed to the incomplete summary provided by the Forest Service in a Federal Register announcement) are twofold:

First, the rules would require the Forest Service to consider the use of "emerging technologies" on trails. They cite ebikes as an example, but they don't limit consideration to motorized bicycles.

Second, in deciding whether motorized bicycles should be allowed on non-motorized trails, the proposed rules would require managers to evaluate whether "effects from ebikes would be comparable to effects from bicycle use."

This reliance on comparable "effects" establishes a standard of review for other "emerging technologies", such as edirt-bikes and emotorcycles and who knows what other e-contraptions that will emerge - many of which could have effects comparable to bicycles.

In fact, the Forest Service's proposed rules already include an edirt-bike of sorts: They would allow managers to approve on non-motorized trails ebikes that are solely propelled by a motor, no pedalling required.

Needless to say, I oppose ebikes on non-motorized forest trails, and I write this as one of the millions of baby boomers encountering physical limitations who could benefit from motorized bicycles. Motor-free trails embody values more important than my desire to reach what's on those trails.