

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/26/2020 4:26:14 PM

First name: Kathy

Last name: Jones

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

CONCERNS

SAFETY

Despite the Forest Service statement that these policy changes are designed 'to provide new opportunities for individuals who might otherwise be prevented from experiencing an NFS trail without assistance from an electric motor,' implying that e-bike users will generally be, as the Interior Order describes, suffering from 'limitations stemming from age, illness, disability, or fitness,' according to a 2019 study by the Portland State University Transportation Research and Education Center, the typical e-bike owner is in 'very good or excellent health,' (53.1%), and only '28.7% reported having a physical limitation that makes riding a standard bicycle difficult.'

77.2% of respondents agreed that 'an e-bike's speed and acceleration are exciting.'

68.5% agreed that 'on my e-bike, I feel like I go faster than other cyclists.'

81.6% agreed that 'on average, I ride faster than I would on a standard bicycle.'

Because e-bikes are surprisingly quiet, this combination of speed (Class III e-bikes can accelerate up to almost 30 mph unassisted) and silence endanger traditional non-motorized trail users, especially hikers, who typically average 2-3 mph, and equestrians, because horses tend to spook extremely easily. Many non-motorized trails are more remote and inaccessible than motorized trails and roads. If non-motorized trails are re-classified as e-bike trails, it is likely that Search & Rescue (SAR) calls will increase, and that more trail users will be injured more severely and more frequently.