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First name: Brian

Last name: Barenberg

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for gathering public comment on an important issue shaping the future use of public lands. I'm an avid mountain biker, and while I personally have no interest in riding an e-bike, I think it is crucial that we categorize and regulate their use appropriately and accurately. Electrically assisted bikes present a novel form of recreation and, as such, assessing their use on public land may mean that they don't fall into any existing category fully. However, I'm extremely concerned about the current approach to classify e-bikes as motorized vehicles. While these bikes may not be classical mountain bikes, they are most certainly not motorized vehicles.

The impact of such a decision will jeopardize funding sources to maintain traditionally non-motorized trails and, by not aligning with recent decisions made within the DOI agencies, will cause more confusion. The current proposals are also cumbersome and require more resources within an already constrained Federal Agency.

Since e-bikes are a new form of recreation, it is important that any new regulations reflect that reality and understand the differences between the various types of new electric bikes--noting that e-bike is not an all-encompassing term. I recommend the following simpler solutions put forth by advocacy organizations and current trail managers:

- 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.

Thank you,
Brian