

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/26/2020 9:06:36 PM

First name: Catherine

Last name: Merris

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I support the Forest Service's proposed revisions to directives regarding management of electric bicycle use on National Forest System lands (FSM 7700 and 7710 E-bikes #ORMS-2619).

Clear policies and rules for electric bicycle management will facilitate electric bicycle management, give more Americans opportunities to explore our public lands, and provide common sense solutions for pressing issues such as traffic congestion, parking, maintenance and emissions reduction.

I support these changes because:

1. Forest Service policies and laws concerning electric bicycle use on public lands are outdated and are confusing for land managers, consumers, small businesses and local governments. These changes are a step in the right direction toward resolving that confusion.
2. The proposed definitions of the three classes of electric bicycles are consistent with the types of electric bicycles people ride.
3. Modernizing the definition of electric bicycles so that they may be used much like regular bicycles will encourage the safe use of electric bicycles and ensure more sensible access.

I respectfully request one modification to the proposed changes -- that electric bicycles be removed from the definition of "motor vehicle" and considered to be a non-motorized use. Electric bicycles are ridden, and should be managed, like traditional bicycles rather than motor vehicles. As an e-bike rider, my desired experience is also identical to that of a regular bike rider and I seek the opportunity to ride my e-bike on the types of trails, roads, and paths that are designated as non-motorized. These areas should continue to be designated as non-motorized and land managers should have the discretion to permit e-bike use. This would align Forest Service policy with other U.S. laws. The Department of the Interior and 28 states (and counting) define electric bicycles as bicycles, exclude them from the motor vehicle classification, and generally allow their use on non-motorized trails.