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Title: Sr. Vice President

Comments: USDA Forest Service

Director - Recreation Staff

1400 Independence Ave SW

Washington, DC 20250-1124

Dear Recreation Staff:

Aspen Skiing Company ("ASC"), a ski resort operator holding Special Use Permits on federal land for four mountain resorts in the White River National Forest, including Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands, Buttermilk and Snowmass ski areas in the State of Colorado, submits the following comments concerning the Forest Services proposed E-bike Directives:

ASC appreciates that the Forest Service recognizes that the public's use of E-bikes is becoming ubiquitous in the public lands and policy recognition and clarification of such use is timely. From ASC's perspective, E-bike use on our permit areas and nearby federal lands is here already and growing. As a practical matter, distinguishing E-bike use distinct from ordinary bicycle use on Forest roads and trail is difficult, even in more actively managed and controlled areas such as our permit areas. The agency's acknowledgement of E-bike use and its encouragement of reasonable E-bike access to Forest lands is prudent, rational and realistic policy. Moreover, closely aligning the Forest Service's Directives with those of the Department of Interior and 27 States provides the public with greater certainty regarding permissible use and is likely to result in better, more uniform, less resistant and more sensitive public compliance.

ASC generally supports and is in accord with comments submitted by the National Association of Ski Areas ("NSAA"), of which we are a member. In particular, we wish to emphasize our concurrence with NSAA's position that the final Directives and procedures for designating trails suitable for E-bike use on the federal lands generally under the Forest Service's Travel Management Rule do not apply to or are not controlling with respect to ski area permittees by reason of explicit exclusion found in that Rule at 36 C.F.R. Sec. 261.13(h). Similarly, the White River National Forest Travel Management Plan makes clear that management of the use of roads and trails with ski area permits is determined, managed and administered under our Special Use Permits, Operating Plans and Project specific approvals. As a permittee, ASC is confident that the existing regulatory framework and the collaborative stewardship exercised with the agency governing lands and activities within our SUP will result in sound, safe and environmentally sensitive recreational use by bicyclists of all types and abilities.

ASC concurs with NSAA's position that E-bikes, or certain classes of them, are not "motorized vehicles" for purposes of the agency's review and treatment because they are not "self-propelled," but instead provide assistance to a rider pedaling the bike. Revising the definitions of "Bicycle" and "Electric Bicycle (E-Bike)" as proposed by NSAA seems sensible, particularly when considered in concert with a subsequent regulatory process to determine which trails may be subject to bicycle or E-Bike use. Broadly recognizing and accepting E-Bike use on trails where bicycle use is permitted today, while potentially reviewing and excluding E-Bike use where it might pose conflicts with other uses seems far simpler, easier, more efficient, and every bit as rational to determine and implement than the reverse, newly identifying, examining, reviewing and approving E-Bike use on a trail by trail basis.

Respectfully submitted,

David G. Corbin

Sr. Vice President - Planning and Development
Aspen Skiing Company