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Comments: To NFS:

I hereby submit my comments re the issue of eBikes on NFS land. I want to thank you for your efforts and inviting public comment. First my summary comment:

I highly support allowing CLASS-1 pedal-assist mountain bikes on any trail for which traditional mountain bikes are allowed access. I know of no compelling rational basis for distinguishing CLASS-1, pedal-assist mountain bikes from traditional mountain bikes (emphasis on CLASS-1, pedal-assist mountain bikes). And while many arguments against Class-1 eMTB trail access, spurious, or otherwise have been propounded, I believe the balancing of equities and fundamental public policy fairness of the pro's in favor of the aforementioned class-1 eMTB access, strongly tip the scale against the cons; especially for persons similarly situated to myself.

I had enjoyed mountain-biking since the early 1980's with my wife, son, and friends both locally, and throughout the Western US and Canada. Years, later, I became afflicted with a heart arrhythmia requiring a pacemaker. Not long thereafter, the condition plus advancing age precluded me from mountain-biking. The advent of mountain-capable pedal assist bikes (bikes with electromagnetic pedaling boost only initiated by, and active with, rider pedaling) gave me a second chance to mountain bike ride.

My cardiologist prescribed regular cardio exercise in order for me to stave off stroke risk associated with my heart condition. (What I consider a tacit endorsement of eMTBs as a health means, MarinHealth Medical Center, an adjunct of Marin General Hospital recently raffled a Specialized e-MountainBike to introduce its new center and its associated web-site). Mountain biking on my eMTB became a primary form of exercise satisfying my cardiologist's directive. After I was back in the saddle, riding my eMTB not only became an important form of exercise, but, an activity I can share with my son during his last several time constrained years at UC Berkeley School of Engineering and his post-graduate engineering job.

I know there are many similarly-situated to me- i.e., who enjoy mountain-biking but due to physical or age-related challenges require pedal-assist MTBs to facilitate their access to open space and mountain trail terrains.

Like with any sub-class of recreational trail users (bikers, hikers, dog-owners, horseback riders) there seems to be a majority of each sub-class who seamlessly share the trails, and a minority who through selfishness, obliviousness or garden variety stupidity, don't. Those with whom I ride, and I expect other pedal-assist eMTB riders, especially those with disabilities who have been given a second bite of the mountain-biking apple, recognize and appreciate the privilege of being able to ride pedal-assist bikes in beautiful open space regions. We constitute a strength in numbers presence on the trails, comprising an in situ force to influence other eMTB'ers to practice extraordinary courtesy and care towards those with whom we share the trails.

Jon Sigerman