

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/27/2020 2:32:53 AM

First name: Ashley

Last name: Lipscomb

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I appreciate that the Forest Service is choosing to classify e-bikes as motorized. However, I am concerned that non-motorized trails may be open to e-bikes or that more lands will be fragmented because of newly established trails to accommodate e-bikes only. Any recreational activity, whether hiking, horseback riding, ATVs, or bikes of any sort, impacts the landscape, the wildlife, streams, and each other. All proposed routes should be subject to site-specific analysis under NEPA, including public comment periods, environmental analysis, and must conform to travel management plans, which acknowledge e-bikes as motorized.

It is also unnecessary to classify e-bikes into three categories. They are all motorized regardless of speed or throttle. They all have a battery assist. E-bike technology will also change. How will these classifications cover faster e-bikes in the future? Is this a slippery slope to allow Class 1 e-bikes on non-motorized trails because of intermittent battery use? I don't see the point, so there must be an underlying reason not apparent to the public.

Law enforcement officers are scarce within the agency. How does the Forest Service plan to deal with illegal incursions into Wilderness or on non-motorized trails, e-bikes inspections to meet regulations, trail maintenance, etc.? The Forest Service can barely catch motorized infractions now.

This is also a matter of safety. Electric assisted e-bikes may boost an individual's sense of physical ability to tackle trails that may be more technical than anticipated. Also, what if the battery fails? Will more rescues be requested in the backcountry? I've already watched countless motorbikes flung off the trail due to technical curves, etc. Forest Service trails are extremely narrow.

The Forest Service is facilitating motorized madness. More signage and education will do nothing to stop illegal incursions.

Who is really behind this rulemaking? What are we opening ourselves up to losing by adding more user groups. National Forest Systems lands cannot accommodate all new technologies -- not now and not into the future.