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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal allowing e-bike usage on BTNF trails. As a concerned citizen and advocate for the preservation of our natural spaces, I believe that such a decision would have detrimental consequences for our cherished wilderness areas and the overall recreational experience of visitors.

BTNF is an essential sanctuary for wildlife and those seeking solace and connection with nature. Forests provide an opportunity to escape the noise and congestion of urban life, offering an environment where one can enjoy the tranquility of the outdoors. Allowing e-bikes on these trails would disrupt this tranquility and threaten the very essence of what national forests represent.

Here are some key reasons why I oppose e-bike usage on national forest trails:

Environmental Impact: E-bikes have a higher environmental footprint compared to traditional bicycles due to their batteries and motors. Allowing e-bikes on trails risks damaging sensitive ecosystems, and causing erosion.

Safety Concerns: Many national forest trails are narrow, rugged, and steep, making them unsuitable for high-speed e-bikes. Allowing these motorized vehicles on such trails poses a significant safety risk to both e-bike riders and other trail users, including hikers, horseback riders, and traditional cyclists.

Trail Erosion: The increased speed and power of e-bikes can lead to accelerated trail erosion, harming the very trails we aim to preserve and maintain for future generations.

Wildlife Disruption: The noise and speed of e-bikes can disturb wildlife, potentially causing animals to flee their habitats and negatively impacting their behavior and survival.

Enforcement Challenges: Another significant concern with the proposed e-bike usage on national forest trails is the inherent difficulty in enforcing these new regulations. The vast and often remote nature of these trail systems makes effective enforcement a considerable challenge. Monitoring whether e-bike riders adhere to class restrictions, trail restrictions, and other regulations would require substantial resources and manpower. Overburdening already stretched forest rangers and trail monitors with this additional task could lead to ineffective enforcement and, subsequently, a breakdown in the rule of law on our cherished trails.

User Conflicts: The introduction of e-bikes on trails may lead to conflicts between different user groups, creating a less harmonious and enjoyable experience for all visitors.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposal to allow e-bike usage on national forest trails. Instead, I encourage you to prioritize the conservation of these precious natural resources, the safety of all trail users, and the overall quality of the recreational experience in our national forests.

Please take into account the concerns of those who are passionate about preserving the integrity and beauty of our national forests. Let us work together to find solutions that balance recreational opportunities with the imperative to protect and conserve these vital natural areas for generations to come.

I hope that you will make a decision that prioritizes the long-term health of our national forests.

Sincerely,

Stewart Paul