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First name: Robert

Last name: Fisk

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Allowing e-bikes into non motorized USFS trails is a poor idea. As a lifelong resident of Jackson and one who has witnessed the proliferation of mountain bikes, I have seen the environmental damage caused by mountain bikes. In the 1970s and 1980s, I traveled on horseback down many trails on the BT and didn't witness trail damage until mountain bikes began using the same trails in the late 1980s. One the mountain bikes traveled the trails, erosion began to significantly damage the trails. This is a simple fact of physics, water rapidly flows down a straight path. When animals or people walk down a trail when muddy, holes are created where the water puddles and slowly flows down the trail, thus reducing erosion.

Opening trails to e-bikes will create more opportunity for environmental damage, not to mention trail conflicts. Imagine someone riding a horse down a trail, when suddenly an e-bike swishes around the corner and startles the horse, who spooks, falls and kills the rider. Will the BTNF Supervisor and Staff be responsible for this horrific (and preventable) accident? Or how about a hiker walking down the trail with a heavy pack and suddenly an e-bike swoops around the corner and collided with the hiker, injuring both the hiker and biker. E-bikes do not require a motor vehicle license or training to operate, so, similar those who ski the backcountry without any knowledge or education, we will see e-bike riders who lack any backcountry skills recklessly riding the trails, putting themselves and others at risk.

Please do not cave to special interests and allow e-bikes on non motorized trails. There are plenty of trails motorized vehicles are allowed. Should the BT decide to allow e-bikes, why should motorcycles not be allowed? There is no difference between the two?