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Comments: First off, I want to thank you for your efforts with respect to crafting this comprehensive plan. The Arizona Trail is an important natural resource to all who hike, bike, or traverse it. It really brings myself great joy whenever I get to enjoy time on it. I only wish I had more free time to enjoy it more frequently! That silly work life balance equation is not always easy to satisfy.

Protecting this natural resource is a critical need. I can already see trails in the area that are in danger of being lost due to encroaching development. Case in point, drive up to Honeybee Canyon and look at how close the houses are to the where that trail network is. You can easily hike to that from said development, but if they decide to keep on moving northward, those trails will be the first thing to go. That weird church will be there forever probably, but the trails wouldn't if a greedy developer had his way. If you can protect the Arizona trail from future loss due to expansion, by perhaps offering a reasonable easement (say 1-2 miles wide on either side of the trail), then this natural resource can be safe for generations to come. I assume this could be achieved by the acquisition of state trust lands to prevent greedy development, and if so, I would support this action wholeheartedly.

I would also encourage the development of new trails that bypass wilderness areas. It can be dangerous to use roads, like we see on Redington Road, which is a bypass for the section of AZT and the Saguaro National Park East. If you drive that road on weekends, you'll see it is a place of much craziness with all the MAGA freaks up there shooting, and drinking cheap beer. The road can get very busy. If there was a better bypass route, that would much more peaceful and safe for both hikers and riders. I'm sure the same can be said for many bypass routes around wilderness areas along the entire trail (which I hope to experience one day).

Lastly, I firmly believe that class 1 e-mountain bikes should not be excluded from the use of these trails. As the population ages, some of us older mountain bikers will be forced to adopt these kinds of bikes to continue the riding we so dearly love. I personally have been riding trails in the Tucson area since the early 90's, and I am approaching 55 years of age this year. Luckily, I still have the ability to ride these trails, but I am afraid that that won't be the case for too much longer. I can already see myself not having the energy to do the epic rides we did in younger days. I feel that these e-bikes do no more damage to trails than their analog equivalents, and in many cases I would think the younger riders that may tend to ride in a more aggressive manner (i.e. skidding around corners, jumping over features, cutting off the singletrack to make a feature, etc.) are more of a damage than a older more seasoned rider on a class 1 e-bike. That's just my opinion, but I am very observant and I feel I have situational awareness that rivals even the best Navy Seal, Delta Force operator, or the like. I pay attention.

That said, I also believe restricting class 1 e-bikes is likely a form of discrimination. Per the National Park Service website, I found this text:

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by Federal Financial Assistance or by any Executive Agency.

This means the NPS not only has to be concerned with enabling people with disabilities to have access to parks and facilities but, once there, the NPS also needs to do everything feasible to enable them to receive as close to the same benefits as those received by other visitors. This also means our obligation extends to individuals with visual impairments, hearing impairments, and cognitive impairments, as well as those with mobility impairments.

I'm no lawyer, but I believe that excluding class 1 e-bikes is possibly a form of discrimination, and feel that this

should be a consideration in your final document. I would agree that e-bikes like that of the Surron are more like electric motorcycles, but a class 1 e-bike with 60 Nm of assist is in all intents and purpose the same as a normal mountain bike, and should not be excluded from the use of these trails.

Thank you for all of your work in protecting this great natural resource, and of course for the ability to comment!