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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

I'd like to voice my concerns allowing E-bikes on more trails around the country. While I am not against E-bikes, as we contemplate getting a couple for our retirement travels, I oppose access to more trail access. I admit that I have no experience hiking and biking the Jackson area, whereas I do have a lot in Columbia, Missouri where we have a decent walking and hiking trail system.

My greatest concern is safety for all trail users. While walking my dogs on both paved and unpaved trails, my dogs and I have had many near misses with bicycles zooming past us with no warning. The lack of reasonable and responsible trail etiquette is dumbfounding. I have witnessed this with experienced road cyclists on paved trails and mountain bikers on single track and wide gravel trails. Many times, a courteous rider will either ring their bike bell or holler "on your left". Unfortunately, most of the time they do not. This lack of courtesy and respect for walkers and hikers is not uncommon and is widespread and poses a serious safety threat to all users.

Recently, while walking our dogs on our favorite paved trail, we were overrun by a group of five young cyclists on E-bikes who were silently cruising downhill at a moderate speed. We were startled and stepped out of the way of the lead bike passing on our left and into the path of the second bike on our right, nearly being struck. The group was not riding single file as they passed us but rather in a pack covering the entire width of the trail. We were left spinning in the middle of the trail as we the E-bikes passed on both sides of the trail. Fortunately, my dogs were off leash, running in the woods, and were out of harms way. If they had been on a leash, it would have been an ugly crash, injuring my dogs, myself and the riders. We have had similar encounters with electric scooters and E-bikes at Army Corps campgrounds except the riders were groups of kids cruising down campground roads.

While the plan to provide more access to more people on public lands is admirable, I think granting access to more trails to E-bikes is questionable at best. Please maintain the current rules or create trails specific to mountain bikes and E-bikes and/or motorized OHVs. Unfortunately, too many cyclists do not seem to value "Share the Road" principles and act with disregard to people walking or hiking in the great outdoors as if they are a nuisance and not worthy of a simple, respectful "on your left" shout-out.

Thank you.